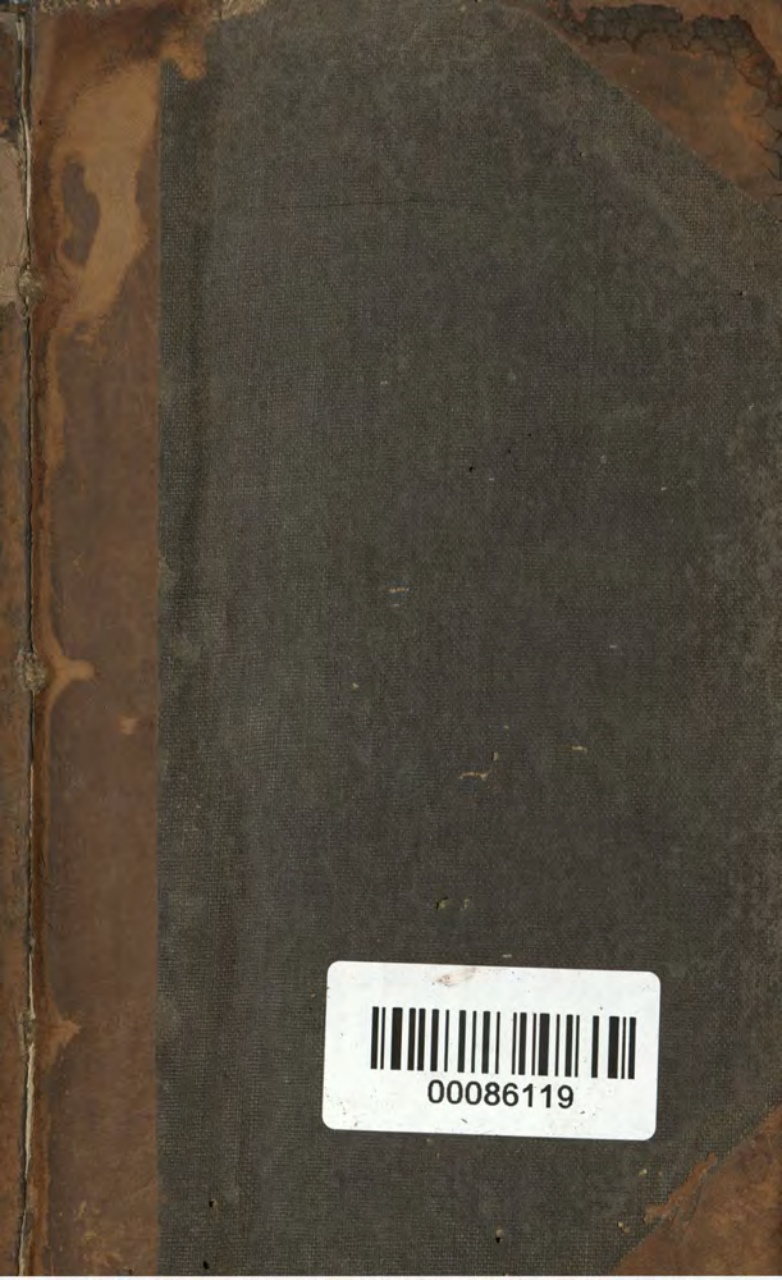
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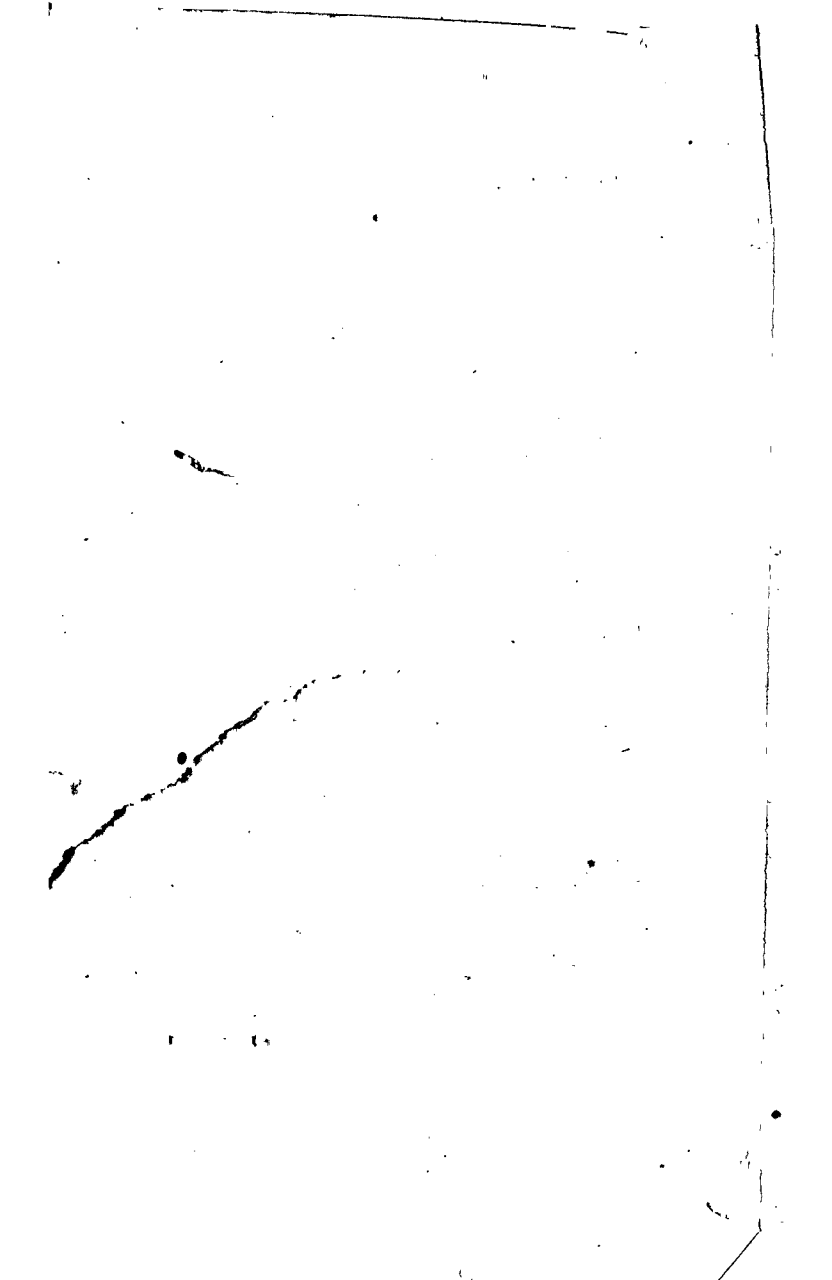
PARIS AND ITS PEOPLE.

yours very truly,
James Grant



PARIS AND ITS PEOPLE.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF

"RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LORDS AND COMMONS," "THE GREAT METROPOLIS,"

&c., &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

In appearing once more before the public, it is unnecessary for the Author to say, that he has, on this occasion, gone over entirely new ground,—ground which, for the most part, has been untrodden by any previous English writer. He trusts, therefore, that notwithstanding all that has been written about Paris, much that is at once new and interesting will be found in these volumes. The Author has not attempted to enter into philosophical disquisitions on the state of society in France: his visit to that country was not sufficiently

protracted for that. He has simply sought to describe what he has seen, and to bring before his countrymen the result of his personal inquiries. He believes he may with confidence say, that no one ever saw, in the same space of time, more than he did, of "Paris and its People."

He devoted himself wholly to the object he had in view, during his stay in the French Capital, and spared no pains to procure such information as he thought likely to prove most interesting to the English reader. It remains with the public to decide with what success he has prosecuted his literary labours in France.

London, Nov. 1843.

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PARIS AND ITS PEOPLE.

CHAPTER I.

HISTORICAL RETROSPECT.

Origin and early history of Paris—When first made the residence of the Kings of France—Incidents in its annals in the middle ages—The monarchs who contributed most largely to improve its appearance.

THE origin and early history of Paris, unlike the origin and early history of the metropolis of England, are so completely enveloped in obscurity, that we rarely meet with any writer of note who even hazards a conjecture on the subject. The first mention of the French capital occurs in Cæsar's Commentaries, written about fifty years before the birth of Christ. That distinguished

writer refers to it under the name Lutetia. It was then the principal town of the Parisii, one of the numerous Celtic tribes which at that time inhabited Gaul. The references which Cæsar makes to the Paris of his day are exceedingly slight and unsatisfactory. All that can be gleaned from them is, that it was an inconsiderable town, built on La Citié, one of the then five islands in the Seine. This island was at the period referred to, much smaller than it now is; two other islands of limited dimensions having been since incorporated with it.

From this time, until the middle of the fourth century, scarcely any notice is taken of Paris. The geographers of the intervening period make some passing allusion to it, under a variety of names; but they leave us in the dark as to the extent or importance of the place. The very fact, indeed, of their not being more copious in their details, may be regarded as a presumptive proof, that Paris was at this period neither extensive nor important.

In the year 358, the emperor Julian informs us that he spent a winter in Paris, and he seems to have been quite delighted with it, for he speaks of it as his dear Lutetia, the little capital of the Parisii. It was in this "dear Lutetia," the Paris of the present day, that he was, two years afterwards, recalled from the government of Gaul, and compelled by his soldiers to assume the imperial office. Seven years posterior to Julian's assumption of kingly power, the emperors Valentinian and Valens spent the winter in Paris. The son of the former emperor fought beneath the walls of Paris the celebrated battle with Maximinus, which not only terminated entirely in his defeat, but, subsequently, in the loss both of his empire and his life. In the year 486, Paris was wrested from the dominion of the Romans by the Franks, under the auspices of Clovis.

In about a quarter of a century afterwards, the Franks made it the capital of their country, having some time before changed its name from

Lutetia to Parisii, or Parisea. When the latter two letters were first dropped, and the name adopted which it now bears, is a point on which I have not been able to obtain any information.

Great diversity of opinion exists among the earlier historians of England, as to the period at which Christianity was introduced into our country. There seems to be no such diversity among the accredited historians of France, respecting the time when the Christian faith was first promulgated in that part of Europe. They all concur in the statement, that St. Denis introduced Christianity among the Parisians about the year 250. Whether the majority of them renounced paganism and embraced the religion of Jesus, on the introduction of the latter, is a point on which the French historians are silent; but the presumption is, that at least, a goodly number must have adopted the new faith, as a bishopric was established in Paris a few years after St. Denis promulgated the truths of Christianity among its people.

Clovis, who, as already mentioned, had dispossessed the Romans, and taken possession of Paris for himself about six years before the close of the fifth century, chose it as the place of his permanent residence in the year 508; from which time it continued to be the residence of the Kings of the Franks, till 567, when the seat of royalty was transferred to another part of the country.

The successors of Clovis were called the Merovingian race of Princes; and they continued to occupy the throne of France, until about the year 750, when Pepin, the father of the celebrated Charlemagne, overthrew their dynasty and possessed himself of the sovereignty of the country. Under his reign, and that of his descendants, who are known in history as the Carlovingian kings, Paris, which had been hitherto steadily growing in extent and importance, ceased to make any further progress. During their dynasty, the entire kingdom was in a state of constant disturbance; and Paris

itself was ever and anon subjected to predatory attacks from the Normans. In the short period which intervened between 845 and 885, it was four times besieged or ravaged by them.

On the accession of Hugh Capet, the founder of the Bourbon dynasty, to the throne of France, he selected Paris as the seat of his court. From that period, namely, 987, till the present day, Paris has been the capital of France. It has continued gradually to rise, with the exception of a few short intervals of slight retrogression, to the importance, extent, and celebrity of which it can now boast, and which make it the second capital of Europe.

It is much to be regretted that there is so great a paucity of authentic information, relative to the size, population, wealth, and importance of Paris, at particular periods of its history.

Among the monarchs of a remoter period, who contributed much to improve the appearance and add to the extent of Paris, Philip Augustus, son of Louis the Seventh, is entitled

to greatest praise. He succeeded his father in 1180, and was constantly employed in making improvements in the capital. Before his time most of the churches and public edifices were built of mud. He caused a great many of them to be rebuilt of stone. He also ordered a number of new places of worship to be erected of the same material, and in a superior style of architecture. To the same monarch Paris is indebted for having first provided it with public fountains, paved its streets, and surrounded it with a wall of surpassing strength.

The estimate given of the amount of the population in the reign of Henry the Third, which closed in the year 1589, is 200,000,—being about a fifth part of the number of its present inhabitants. The greatest extension of Paris took place under the reigns of three of the Louises,—namely, the Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth; but, so far as regards the mere beautifying of the city, Paris owes more to Napoleon than to any three or four of the previous

sovereigns. In the short space of twelve years, he gave an entirely new aspect to some of its more important parts, by the number of tasteful improvements which he made. And even those numerous and great improvements which have been made since the accession of Louis Philippe, are, in almost every instance, to be ascribed to Napoleon; for they are either the completion of the improvements which he had commenced, or the adoption of suggestions which he had made for beautifying and adorning Paris

CHAPTER II.

THE STREETS—EXTERNAL ASPECTS.

Entering the town—The Tuileries—Height of the houses—Their appearance—Shops—Shopwomen—Narrowness of the streets—The pavements—Sights offensive to the eye—The streets imperfectly lighted—Windows and window-blinds—Supply of water—The river—Bridges, &c.

THE first impression of Paris which a stranger receives depends on the part of the town at which he makes his entrance. The impression of most Englishmen is unfavourable, because they mostly enter by the Boulogne road. Nothing could be more fitted to create a feeling of disappointment, after all that we have read and heard of the gaiety and grandeur of this cele-

brated city, than the small, dingy, half ruinous houses, which crowd on the stranger's eye wherever he turns it, as he passes along this part of the Parisian suburbs. If, on the other hand, he enter by the Champs Elysées, his expectations of architectural taste and magnificence, blended with rural beauty, will be raised to a pitch which the city itself will hardly realise. It were difficult to imagine a more imposing entrance into a city, than the entrance into Paris by the Champs Elysées. You there pass the Barrier de l'Etoile, which is, perhaps, the most majestic arch of the kind in the world. Englishmen are accustomed to admire the grand entrance into Hyde Park, at Apsley House, but it is unworthy the name of architectural magnificence compared with the majestic barrier of l'Etoile. And just as the stranger passes it, a singularly beautiful prospect opens to his view. He sees a considerable portion of Paris in the distance, with all the magnificence of the Tuileries in the fore-ground; while on either side, extending

nearly a mile and a half, are many rows of trees of stately size and ample foliage, all planted with perfect regularity, and producing an effect on the mind of the spectator far too pleasing to admit of description. As you proceed farther on this beautiful road, you near the gardens of the Tuileries, which never yet has been beheld for the first time by an intelligent person without confounding him with their surpassing beauty. The place embraces an extent of nearly seventy acres, all laid out in the most tasteful and variegated manner. We have nothing approaching to it in this country; and it may be doubted whether the ingenuity of man has produced anything, of a similar kind, equal to it, in any part of the world. The Tuileries are divided into several departments, each differing in appearance from the other, but all complete in themselves. Trees, shrubs, flowers, fountains, statues, and gilded columns of richest workmanship, are all intermingled together with an effect of which it were impossible for the most graphic

description to convey an idea—an effect which is greatly heightened by the adjoining pavilions and terraces. The Tuileries are inconceivably beautiful; but in a fine moonlight night in summer they possess all the enchantment of a fairy scene. In the months of August and September last, I stood in the centre of the Tuileries, and felt myself literally bewildered with the glories around me. In this part of Paris are some of the finest specimens of architecture in the place. On the left is the beautiful Rue Rivoli; on the right are the Chamber of Deputies, and the Hospital of Invalids; while in front are the palace and other celebrated edifices. If asked whether the workmanship of nature or that of man be more worthy of admiration, as you look at the lovely combination of both in the Tuileries, you are constrained to admit your incompetency to speak with any confidence on the point. Few and far between are the instances in which nature and man so harmoniously and effectively co-operate together

as in this charming locality. It is no wonder, then, that the Parisians should be so anxious that all illustrious visitors should enter their city by the Champs Elysées and the Tuileries. When the Duchess of Orleans, on her marriage with the late lamented Duke, made her entrance into Paris, it was arranged, for the purpose of inspiring her with exalted notions of the place, that she should enter at this part of Paris, though it was quite out of her way.

But I must not linger any longer in this spot, surpassingly delightful though it be: I must at once plunge into the very heart of Paris, and view the city in its diversified aspects.

Nothing more forcibly strikes the stranger, the first few days he has been in Paris, than the height of the houses and the narrowness of the streets. The houses in all the leading streets range from five to seven stories in height. In most cases they have a lively, because a very variegated appearance. Though all built of stone, the fronts are covered over with plaster

of Paris, similar to the houses in Regent Street, and other places in London: they have, consequently, a perfectly smooth surface. Most of them are painted in fancy colours; and as these colours not only differ on different houses, but frequently even on the front of the same house, there is something very pleasing, as well as strange to the eye of the visitor, in the aspect of many of the streets. I am here speaking of those streets in the most busy parts of the city. In these, the very large size of the houses, and the exorbitance of the rents, render it impossible for one individual to occupy the whole of the premises. Every such house is occupied by a number of individuals, and as each individual has a right to paint the front of that part of the house which he rents, in any way he pleases, that circumstance will account for the various hues which the aspect of particular houses presents. Another circumstance which gives the leading thoroughfares in Paris a peculiarly lively appearance, is the number of signs,

and the variety and size of the letters. Most of these signs consist of the name and business of the parties painted, as with us, on a board which is affixed to the wall: in other cases, the letters are painted on the walls themselves,—the smooth surface, to which I have already referred, being peculiarly adapted for this. The signs usually extend over the whole breadth of the front; and the gigantic proportions of the letters will be understood, when I mention that they are often two feet in length and one foot in breadth. The shops are not, as with us, confined to the ground-floor; many of them are on the first and second floors, to which there is access through a broad gateway from the street, and an exceedingly wide stair-case. What may appear to the English reader more extraordinary still, is the fact, that some of the shops doing the largest amount of business in fancy articles, are situated in obscure courts and localities, up one, two, three, and sometimes even four pair of stairs.

The shops of Paris will not, in reference to size and splendour, bear a moment's comparison with those of London. Much as the Parisian prides himself on the gaiety and splendour of his favourite city, he cannot help being struck with the great superiority of London shops to his own, as he passes along Regent Street and other parts of our metropolis. The Paris shops are very small; nor, though tastefully fitted up in the interior, have they any pretensions to an imposing appearance. The fancy articles in the jewellery, drapery, and other lines of business, are of the best quality and of the most exquisite workmanship: still there is a want of that magnificence in the appearance of Paris shops, which is so characteristic of the higher order of shops in London. The fronts are plain, and the windows are small. Were it possible to transfer one of the first class of shops from Regent Street, or Ludgate Hill, or St. Paul's Churchyard, to Paris, it would be constantly visited by crowds of people as one of the wonders of the

place. But though the shops of Paris cannot be compared, in point of size, with those of London, the Parisian shop-keepers display immeasurably more taste than the shop-keepers in our metropolis, in the fitting up of their premises and the display of their articles. The Paris shops are remarkable for the number and the size of their mirrors. Look in what direction you may, after you have entered, and you see your person reflected at full length. In some cases, indeed, you can hardly see anything but mirrors. And the entire fitting up displays corresponding taste. Then, as regards the arrangement and grouping of the articles for sale, nothing could be more tasteful. Everything in the shop is seen, and everything is seen to the best advantage. But the Parisian shopkeeper remembers that every passer by does not enter his shop, and therefore he very wisely bestows his special attention on his windows. The quantity of articles he contrives to place in his windows, and the effect with which he displays

them, are the wonder and admiration of all strangers. The window of a Parisian shop—I am assuming, of course, that it is in the fancy line—is a sight worth going a day's journey to witness; it is quite a study—a perfect picture. It affords an exhibition of artistical skill, of which the people of no other country can have any conception. I never looked at a French shopkeeper's window without the conviction forcing itself on my mind, that he who arranged its contents must be an artist, though he may himself be unconscious of it; and that had he turned his attention to any department of art, requiring a combination of the imaginative faculty with an exquisite taste in the practical embodiment of his notions, he must have attained a celebrity of no common order. A Frenchman's window may, indeed, be often said to be his shop. Look at his window, and you see all the valuable property he possesses in the world. It is often valuable in reality, but its worth frequently appears to be greater than it

is, from the surpassing taste displayed in the arrangement of the various articles.

In whatever is tasteful and fanciful, indeed, the Parisians are incomparably our superiors: they stand alone and unapproachable among the nations of the world in everything in which the fancy is concerned. Their mode, too, of lighting up their shops is incomparably superior to ours. It is not only that they are more abundantly lighted than the shops of London, but they are lighted up with infinitely greater taste. The shops in the more fashionable and best frequented parts of Paris, present a scene of liveliness and beauty which it were wholly impossible to describe. Perhaps I might here remark, that, in the eye of many, the pleasing effect produced by the Parisian shops is very considerably heightened by the number of beautiful and well-dressed young women that are to be found in them. It is a curious fact, that there is scarcely a shop in any of the principal thoroughfares in Paris, in which are not to be

seen one or more handsome young women: very generally there are three, four, five, and sometimes as many as six or seven. They are all employed either in selling, sewing, or making up fancy articles. No matter what the business is which is followed in the shop, there you are sure to see some young women. They are generally good-looking; and to whatever nature has done for them, they themselves make great additions by the singularly tasteful manner in which they always dress. They are as neat and tidy as if they were so many wax figures dressed up for an exhibition. The taste they display in the adjustment of their hair, particularly strikes an Englishman, and leads him to contrast the appearance, in this respect, of young women in the same station of life in his own country. To the moral character of these young women in the shops of Paris, I shall have occasion to refer in another part of this work.

In the summer season, several of the leading streets of Paris have, in particular parts, much

of a horticultural aspect. Most of the windows in the upper stories are filled with flowers of various kinds, and along the fronts of many of the houses are balconies so abundantly laden with every diversity of flowers, as to have the appearance of so many little gardens. This particularly struck me in the middle of the Rue St. Honoré.

The streets in the centre of the city are exceedingly narrow. Put the two pavements in some of our streets—Holborn Hill, for instance, together—and their width will be as great as that of many of the leading streets in Paris. There is barely room for two vehicles, such as omnibuses of the larger class, to pass each other with safety and ease. The pavements, too, are very narrow; they are rarely more than four or five feet in width: many of them are narrower still. In most of the principal streets, it is with difficulty two persons walking arm-in-arm can meet a third person, without one of the three being jostled off the pavement.

The narrowness of the pavements no doubt follows as a necessary consequence of the narrowness of the streets, but it is a curious circumstance that the pavements, such as they are, should not be continuous along the principal thoroughfares. In several of the leading streets, the continuity is repeatedly broken by patches of causeway, such as we see in the middle of our streets. In many of the streets, indeed, and some of them of no small consideration, there is no pavement at all along the sides of the houses. Hence, the circumstance which strikes the Englishman as so strange, that so many pedestrians are to be seen walking in the middle of the streets. With us, a pedestrian has no business in the centre of the streets, except in crossing: in Paris, you see numbers of persons constantly in the middle of the streets, walking along on rough causeway, the best way they can. In most cases, where there is no pavement, the centre of the street is, on more accounts than one, to be preferred to a nearer contiguity to the

houses. Within a few feet of the houses, there is a gutter, which, even in the driest and finest weather has the appearance of a small rivulet; and, in rainy weather, presents a most muddy and unpleasant sight. This rivulet of muddy water, is often still more ungrateful to the sense of smelling. Even in the very finest streets, where the pavements are continuous, the absence of under-ground conduits for the water causes a perpetual puddle before the best shops in Paris. That this should be tolerated by a people so advanced in civilization as the French, must strike every foreigner as surprising. In some of the streets there is a gutter in the middle, without a foot of pavement on either side; but I am not so surprised at this, as these streets are for the most part the lowest and least frequented.

A lady walking along the ordinary streets of Paris, cannot retain the arm of a gentleman for a couple of minutes at a time—not even in the finest weather in summer—in consequence of the necessity she is under of attending to her

dress. You see ladies, indeed, in the most delightful weather, walking along some of the streets of Paris, with their dresses taken up as in England when the pavements have been covered with mud, after a heavy rain. It is along the curb stone that these puddles, or miniature rivers of mud, assail the eye, and another organ which it is needless to name. The entrance to the houses is not, as in England, by a small private door, but by a large double door resembling a gateway. From most of these gateways, and from all of them at times, there issues a quantity of water, which very soon acquires all the disagreeable qualities of a stagnant pool. With this ever-recurring nuisance,—which, however, I ought to remark, is much worse in some streets than others—the pedestrian has to contend. A fine lady tries to step over it without soiling the extremity of her dress. She is successful in the attempt, but then, the very next moment she may be jostled off the narrow pavement, and step into the gutter along

the kerbstone, up to the ankles in water which has neither the attribute of purity nor fragrance to reconcile her to a contact with it.

The narrowness of the streets of Paris is an evil which cannot be easily cured. To pull down the whole of the houses in front, and also a considerable portion of those at the back, would be the only effectual remedy; but where the houses are so large and commodious (and it is to be remembered that nearly one half of Paris is in this predicament) this would be a rather expensive expedient to which to resort. But though the inconvenience of exceedingly narrow streets must therefore be submitted to for generations to come (with the best philosophy the Parisians can bring to bear on the point), there surely can be no excuse for tolerating a little rivulet of water, or a stagnant pool on a small scale, in the gutter, before the houses and doors. The remedy for that evil is simple, cheap, efficacious. Let conduits be formed under ground, and the thing is done.

But, bad as the evil referred to is, there are nuisances of a still more offensive kind, which are hourly, indeed almost momentarily witnessed; and (which is more unfortunate still) which you cannot fail to witness as you pass along the principal streets of Paris. In England, warnings are given, by perpetual inscriptions, against committing the indecencies to which I allude; and delicacy is, in consequence, but seldom shocked in this way. In Paris, so far are the civic or other authorities from putting down these offences against all sense of decency, that they actually, by small exposed constructions, invite the passers by to their commission. And this, too, in what Frenchmen tell us is the finest, the fairest, and most fashionable city in the world!

The principal streets are lighted with gas. Until within the last few years the mode of lighting the French capital, was, in every instance, by lamps suspended from ropes extending across the streets, at a height of fifteen

or sixteen feet. Nothing could be more gloomy than the appearance of the streets at night, before the introduction of gas-light. They wore a sepulchral aspect. They would have inspired less terror, had there been no other light than that emitted by the windows of the houses and the shops. Atrocious crimes were then often committed in the streets of Paris. Stories connected with these horrible enormities, have been transmitted by parents to their children, and are still the theme of conversation among the lower classes. Even with some intelligent persons there is an idea that it is not safe to pass along the more imperfectly lighted streets after dusk. I am acquainted with several gentlemen who would not on any account cross the less frequented bridges at night. Their minds are haunted with the alarming stories they have heard, of numbers of persons that have been robbed in former times, and thrown over these bridges into the Seine. I believe their fears are wholly groundless. I am

satisfied that persons are quite as safe in passing along the bridges of Paris, as they are in passing along those of London. I am, however, inclined to think, that in the north eastern part of Paris, which has long been inhabited by the lowest and most reckless of the population, persons are in some danger of their lives, if they should have occasion to be in that particular part at a late hour, and in a dark night. So many dead bodies are dragged out of the canal in the neighbourhood, as to force the conviction on men's minds that they do not all commit suicide, but are thrown into the water by others. The sum of fifteen francs is given to any person finding a dead body, and it is believed by some of the most intelligent persons in Paris, that there are men so depraved in that city, as to throw persons into the canal, in order that by taking them out after they are dead, they may obtain the usual reward.

Paris is not nearly so well lighted as London. While the shops are open there is abundance of

light in all the main thoroughfares; but when they are closed, there is a great deficiency of light in the very best of the streets. Hence, in the dead of night there is something much more forbidding in the aspect of the Parisian streets than there is in the streets of our great metropolis. I have not been able to ascertain the exact number of lights in London and Paris down to a recent period; but a few years ago, there were 60,000 lamps in London; while there were only, including 500 belonging to public establishments, about 6,000 in Paris. Surely, after every allowance is made for the much greater extent of ground which the English metropolis covers, and that occupied by the capital of France, there would not be so great a disparity between the number of lights in the two cities, were the latter as well lighted as the former. What strikes the stranger, in connection with the lighting of Paris, as most extraordinary of all is, the circumstance of some of the most magnificent public buildings

being so badly lighted. Even the Louvre itself is still lighted with miserable lamps,—the glare of which, after they have burned a few hours, only serves to make darkness visible.

The window blinds of the houses in Paris are very different from those in England. They all open and shut from the outside. When closed, they are on a level with the walls, and, consequently, the whole front of the building presents as even a surface as if there were not a single window in it. The blinds are generally about an inch in thickness, and instead of being solid, as with us, they are all slit. The slits are about an inch apart, and each bar is about an inch in width. The slits are made in a slanting direction, so as to let in the light and air, while they exclude the rays of the sun. In summer, when the heat is inconveniently great, the blinds are often closed along entire streets. The impression which this creates on the mind of an Englishman is, that the whole of the houses are uninhabited. When on the other hand, the

temperature is not inconveniently high, and the blinds are all thrown open, one folding to the right, and the other to the left, they give a very picturesque and pleasing appearance to the houses.

The windows in Paris are also unlike ours. Instead of drawing up and down, they open and shut like a double door. There is less trouble in opening and closing French windows; but to the eye of an Englishman they look heavy and inelegant. They are longer and narrower than ours.

As an Englishman passes along the streets of Paris, he is not only, as already remarked, struck with the rivulets or pools of water which he sees by the side of the kerbstone, but with the number of persons who are employed in drawing and carrying water from the fountains which are opened in all parts of the town. None of the houses—not, at least, so far as my observation extended—possess the convenience of having the water in them. Families are regu-

larly supplied with water, at so much per annum, according to the quantity consumed. An ordinary family have to pay from twenty-five to thirty shillings a year for the supply of water, which is brought to them with the same regularity as the milk-men in our metropolis supply their customers with that commodity. The average sum paid annually by the Parisians for the needful supply of water, is 4,000,000 francs, or £160,000. The water is usually carried in two buckets, suspended from a board placed on the right shoulder of the carrier, and not on both shoulders, as may be seen in some parts of England. When he happens to be more than ordinarily employed in carrying water, a large cask is put in requisition, which he draws on a truck to the doors of his customers. Into this truck he is harnessed in the same way as if he were a horse. He drags the vehicle after him by means of his body, rather than by his arms.

Small patches of wooden pavement have been laid down in a few of the streets of Paris. There

does not, however, so far as I could learn, exist any very strong desire for the general adoption of this new description of pavement.

The river Seine, which has been already alluded to, runs from west to east through Paris. It is a small river, not admitting of a moment's comparison with the river Thames. It is bridged over in a great many places; the number of bridges, within a distance of about two miles and a half, is eighteen or nineteen. In several instances they are so near, that you might almost throw a stone from one to the other. On some of them there are several shops,—booksellers', ready-made clothesmen's, &c. In these shops a considerable amount of business is done. On the river itself, there are no traces of traffic; here and there you may discern a small skiff, or even a lilliputian steam-boat, but the probability is that both are lying unemployed. In the centre of the Seine there are various large wooden erections, in which a great many women are employed in washing clothes.

There are other erections in which are a number of baths; but beyond these and one or two small boats, which are rarely employed, you look in vain for any symptoms of trade or commerce on the Seine. There is more traffic in one hour on our Thames, than there is on the Seine of Paris in a whole year.

One thing which struck me as being remarkable, and which the Parisians themselves must find to be exceedingly inconvenient, is the absence of names on doors. Fifteen or twenty families live in one house, and yet there is neither a general list of the names of the occupants at the entrance, nor is there on the door of his apartment, when you have reached it, the name of the person you are in quest of. Although I was in some scores of houses during my stay in Paris, I only remember one instance, that of an English professional man, in which I saw a name on a door. Connected with every large house, however, there is a porter called a "Concièrge," whose business it is to di-

rect the inquirer to the apartments of the party he is in quest of; but then, when the inquirer is a foreigner and cannot speak the language, he finds himself no better off than if there were no such person as this porter,—who, I ought to remark, is generally a woman.

The houses in Paris have no knockers, with the exception of one on the front door,—which, as will have been inferred from what has already been stated, may rather be said to be a large ponderous close gate, made to open in halves. The knocker on this gateway or massy door, is one of colossal proportions. A single energetic knock is given when a person wishes to enter. Beyond this, knockers and knocking are unknown in France. When you get to any apartment which you wish to enter, you pull a string which rings a bell, and the intimation of the bell, you will find, meets with an immediate response from some of the persons within.

CHAPTER III.

PUBLIC VEHICLES—PRIVATE EQUIPAGES.

Public vehicles deficient in elegance—Slow rate at which they are driven—Modes in which matters are managed—Scale of charges—Hints to strangers—New class of cabs—Private carriages and cabriolets.

THE vehicles of Paris want the elegance and comfort of those of London. The cabs are for the most part the same in form as they are with us; so are the coaches; but the Paris cabmen do not seem to pride themselves, as the same class of persons do in England, on keeping their vehicles in becoming order. They are all covered with dust. No well-dressed lady or

gentleman can go into a Parisian cab without their clothes being more or less soiled. The horses, too, are much inferior to those which we see on the cab-stands of London. They have, with scarcely an exception, the appearance of old worn-out animals—an impression which is strengthened by the manner in which they acquit themselves when their services are required. They proceed at a very slow pace; so slow, indeed, that it can hardly be called running at all. The animal's head is all the while on a level with his knees. And yet, I am assured, that though many of the horses which are to be found on the coach-stands of Paris, seem as if they were fitter for the tan-yard than for working in the streets, they are capable of doing a great deal of work, and often go over an incredible extent of ground in the course of the day. I can the more readily believe this, inasmuch as the Paris cabman very rarely applies the whip to his horse. He has got, it is true, a habit of cracking his whip whenever he wishes to acce-

lerate the speed of the animal, but he hardly ever lays it on his shoulders. And it is due to the Paris horses to say, that this seems to be an intelligible language to them: they appear to understand quite as well what is meant by it, as if they were made to smart under the actual application of the lash.

The omnibuses of Paris are very different from those in London, and they are managed in a very different way. They are exceedingly light; so very light, indeed, as to have quite a rickety appearance. They are mostly licensed to carry sixteen passengers inside, while with us the average accommodation is for twelve: yet so much lighter are they in the construction, that I am sure it would be much easier for a pair of horses to draw a Parisian omnibus with eighteen passengers, than it would be to draw one of ours with its inside complement of a dozen. The omnibuses in Paris have no closing doors—not even in winter. In the absence of a door to shut in his passengers, the conductor stands

on a step in the middle, instead of on a projection on the left side, as with us. Persons pay on their entrance, or rather after they have taken their seats, and not on their going out, as in England. I may here mention, that in this respect the Parisian patrons of this class of vehicles have the advantage of us; for the stoppages consequent on the frequent changing of money, when paying the conductor, are avoided. You never hear expressions, on the part of the omnibus conductors of Paris, similar to those of "Hold hard," "All's right," and so on, which every moment accost the ear in passing along the leading thoroughfares of London. When the conductor wishes to take up an additional passenger, he pulls a cord which communicates with the driver, who immediately brings his horses to a stand-still. The moment the passenger has taken his seat, the conductor turns a wheel,—somewhat on the principle of the wheel at Waterloo Bridge, which is always turned when the passenger pays his toll. This wheel

causes a clock to strike once, twice, or thrice, according to the number of passengers who enter. The passengers have, consequently, an opportunity of observing whether the conductor be or be not just to his employers. If he were not to turn the wheel round, and cause the clock to strike when a passenger enters, or were only to cause it to strike twice when three passengers had taken their seats, every one present would see that he was dishonest; and some one, doubtless, would take the trouble of informing the proprietor of the vehicle. As the wheel turns round, a piece of iron, resembling the hand of a clock, advances on a dial, and indicates the number of passengers who have entered since the omnibus started.

The Parisian omnibuses are much wider than ours. Instead of the passengers' knees meeting, and thus rendering it exceedingly difficult for any one to enter or to go out, the Paris omnibuses have the most ample accommodation. Any one may pass in or out with the greatest

ease, without treading on some gentleman's corny toe, or tumbling into some lady's lap. And to steady the passenger's motion when making his entrance or exit, there is a piece of strong leather, somewhat resembling a horse's reins, which passes along the roof of the vehicle, and which he has only to lay hold of to secure a firm footing. Omnibus travelling is, therefore, much more comfortable in Paris than with us. But, perhaps, the best recommendation of all remains to be mentioned: the charge in Paris is only one half, what it is in London. For threepence, you may go from one end of Paris to the other. There is another advantage, too, in omnibus travelling in the capital of France: I refer to the fact, that, if a particular omnibus only goes a part of your way, you will get a ticket, which will put you free into another omnibus which runs in the direction of the place to which you wish to go. For the purpose of seeing to the proper accommodation of passengers, there is a tasteful little office at the

place whence the vehicle starts. In this office there are cushioned seats for those persons who may be about to proceed by the omnibus. And yet, with all these advantages over us, the Parisians do not seem to be so liberal in their patronage of omnibuses as we are. I seldom saw more than nine or ten persons in an omnibus at once; generally there were not more than seven or eight. In London, it often happens that an omnibus is so crowded, that neither in the vehicle nor on the top is there room for any more. This is not often the case with the omnibuses of Paris. When it does happen, a small board is placed on the top of the vehicle, with the word "complet" on it, which all know to be an intimation that the conductor has obtained his complement.

Riding through Paris, by coaches and cabriolets, is also cheaper than in London, though not in the same proportion as in omnibuses. The charge for a cab is a franc and a quarter, or a shilling and a halfpenny, for "the course;"

which means from any one part of Paris towards another. If you engage a cab for the hour, the charge is a franc and seventy-five centimes, or a shilling and five-pence halfpenny. If you prefer a coach, or *fiacre*, the charge for the course is fifteen pence. In addition to the charge, however, a gratuity of two or three halfpence is expected by the driver,—he being in the employ of a master, and not hiring the vehicle on his own account, as is done in London. He lives by the gratuities given him over and above the usual fare, just as waiters do in eating-houses and hotels; but still it is entirely optional with the party employing him to give or withhold the usual gratuity. The stranger runs no risk of being overcharged, the prices of the fares being placed in a conspicuous place in the vehicle. If the time for which you have employed a coach or cab exceeds an hour, and you have made no agreement with the driver, it is optional with him to charge you either by time or by "the course."

There is little gained by engaging a Paris cab for an hour, unless you have occasion to call at a number of places; in which case the charges by "the course" would become enormously great, the cabman having the right to charge a franc and a quarter for every time you stop. He has, indeed, this right, if you only ask him to stand for a few minutes, while you take some refreshment in passing a confectioner's shop. If you have no occasion to make calls, it is better to hire the cab by the course, as the cabman knowing that he has a certain extent of ground to go over at a certain price, drives his horse at a proportionably rapid rate. When you engage his vehicle by the hour, he allows his horse to take his own time. At the moment of starting, the animal ascertains, by a species of freemasonry which passes between him and the driver, whether you have hired the vehicle by the course or the hour. If the latter, the horse moves away at a rate which reminds one of the school-boy illustration of slow progression—

namely, "a snail at the gallop." The horse is allowed to take his own time, and he does take it. The driver at once becomes one of the kindest and most considerate men in the world. He would not, on any consideration, not even were the universe offered to him as an inducement, apply the lash to his horse. He is all of a sudden seized with a fit of humanity to the brute creation, which would have rejoiced the heart of the late Mr. Martin. The understanding is complete between him and his horse, as to the pace at which the latter ought to proceed; and this understanding is uninterruptedly kept up until the expiration of the period agreed on between the cabman and his customer.

In point of civility, the Paris cabmen and conductors of omnibuses are far before the same class of persons in this country. The passenger has very rarely cause to complain of any want of proper respect being shown to him; far less of that coarse abuse with which an Englishman always associates the idea of a Lon-

don vehicle. Neither, so far as I could learn, are this class of men addicted to quarrelling among themselves, or indulging in a copious application of low and vulgar epithets to each other.

There is, however, one very unpleasant thing connected with the drivers of Paris cabs. I allude to the fact, that in a great many, though not in a majority of these vehicles, the driver actually sets himself down alongside his passenger. No matter how dirty his appearance may be, he will coolly plant himself beside the finest and most elegantly dressed lady in the land. There are many things which I should not have expected from the Parisians, and the toleration of this practice is one of the number.

I have already referred to the slow rate at which the vehicles in Paris are driven. It seems somewhat incompatible with this fact, that there should be a much greater number of persons run down in Paris, in proportion to the number of vehicles plying and the amount of population,

than in London, where cabs, coaches, and omnibuses, are driven with so much rapidity, and where the streets are so densely crowded. There being no coroners' inquests in Paris, the number of deaths occurring from persons being driven over in the streets cannot be so accurately ascertained as with us; but a French gentleman who has applied himself to the acquisition of information of this kind, calculates the number of deaths from this cause at 520 per annum, or, on an average, ten every week.

The number of each cab is put up on four places—on three outside and one inside. Gentlemen's cabriolets are numbered in the same way as those which ply for hire. An Englishman would think this an insult, and would resent it accordingly. The French noblemen and gentlemen, however, do not seem to view the matter in this light; and if they are satisfied, we have no right to complain. All cabs and coaches, those of private persons as well as those which are at the service of the public, are obliged to

have lights after sunset. When a person travelling in a coach or cab wishes to stop the driver, he has not to pull a string, as with us, but turns round a small brass screw in the front part of the cab. This causes a sound resembling a clock when striking one, and the driver pulls up immediately. Most of the coachmen and cabmen are dressed in a sort of livery, with conspicuous brass buttons on their coats, and crape round their hats. I have already borne testimony to their remarkable civility: how far this civility is the result of a natural disposition to be polite, or is the effect of certain stringent police regulations, is not easy to say. The police of Paris watch with a very keen eye all classes of the community, and no class receive more of their attention than the coachmen and cabmen. A wooden box is placed in the immediate neighbourhood of every coach-stand, in which box a person appointed by the police is constantly to be found, to listen to any complaint of incivility or overcharging that may be preferred against

the drivers of the vehicles, and to procure redress, where the complaints are well-founded. The fear of this functionary is, doubtless, constantly before the eyes of the cabmen, and they take every possible care to keep out of his clutches. Such an arrangement is most urgently needed in London: it would save the public a world of inconvenience and insult.

A new class of cabs has been recently introduced into Paris, about which it is well for strangers that a few words should be said. They bear an exact resemblance to gentlemen's cabriolets, and are only to be found standing in gateways and other covered places. If you call one of these cabs, you will be charged a third more than the ordinary fare, and be subjected, too, in addition, to the unpleasantness of the driver thrusting himself in beside you. Nor is this all: these vehicles are all two-wheeled, and are consequently more unpleasant, because less steady, than those (of which there are many

on every stand in Paris) which are of the four-wheeled construction.

The number of omnibuses, coaches, and cabs, in Paris, bears no proportion to the number of these vehicles for public accommodation in London. I am sure I speak within limits when I say, that for every omnibus, coach, or cab, you see in the capital of France, you see twenty in the metropolis of Great Britain.

So much for the omnibuses, coaches, cabs, and carriages of Paris. A word or two now about some of the other vehicles, which are always to be seen in the streets of that city. The carts are very unlike those in England; they are nearly twice as long, and twice as deep as ours, but only half as broad. They are much easier to draw, because the wheels are much larger in their circumference, though not of a heavier construction. Waggons are constructed in the same way; but the larger sort of these have six wheels, the middle ones being twice as large as

those which are on the fore and hind parts of the vehicles. In most instances, the horses which draw the carts and waggons of Paris, have bells on their neck or head, which perpetually jingle as they pass along the streets; making, to the ear of the Englishman, most unmusical sounds, though seemingly very pleasant to the ear of the Parisian.

In a chapter devoted to the vehicles of Paris, it will be expected that something be said respecting the equipages of noblemen and gentlemen. Of these there are remarkably few to be seen in the centre of the town. In nothing more strikingly than in this fact, does the superiority of London, in wealth and grandeur, appear to the observant eye. In the central, or business parts of Paris, you may pass along streets more than half a mile in length, without seeing a single carriage, and possibly not more than one or two cabriolets. In no part of London, where there is any thoroughfare at all, can

you open your eyes without seeing a succession of carriages whirling past you with an astounding rapidity. Even in the Champs Elysées, which may be said to be the Hyde Park of Paris, the number of equipages bears no proportion to that which is to be seen in the fashionable drives of our metropolis. I speak advisedly when I say, that for one private carriage to be seen in the streets or suburbs of Paris, there are fifty to be seen in London. When I come to speak of society in the French capital, the reason of this will be sufficiently apparent. Neither are the French equipages at all equal in point of quality to ours. Our horses and carriages are so superior to those of the French, that you can point out an English equipage among a hundred French ones. Some of the more splendid Anglican equipages actually create a sort of sensation, when they are seen dashing along the Boulevards or the Champs Elysées. No honest Frenchman will, I am

confident, venture to question the truth of this. He will feel constrained to admit our superiority here, even though disposed to deny it in everything else.

CHAPTER IV.

GENERAL REMARKS ON THE PLACE.

Form of Paris—Its size as compared with London—Architectural aspects—The Boulevards—Palais Royale—Arcades—Class localities.

THE form of Paris approaches the circular. Any one will perceive this, who stations himself on the top of the grand triumphal entrance at the Barrier de l'Etoile, or takes his stand on any of the heights which are so numerous in the immediate neighbourhood of the city. Among the best views which I obtained of Paris, one was from Pere-la-Chaise, the celebrated cemetery, and another from the road to Versailles. From

either of these spots, the eye not only takes in the whole city, but Paris is seen with a distinctness and completeness, which leave a permanent impression of the form and aspect of the city. Seen from any of the surrounding heights, Paris appears a beautiful town, romantically and pleasantly situated; but it fails to inspire any of those ideas of vastness, with which the mind of the visitor is filled, who, on a summer morning, when the sky is clear, beholds from an eminence the great metropolis of England. The difference in magnitude between the two cities may be inferred from the fact, that while from any height adjoining Paris, the eye has no difficulty in taking in the whole of that city, the spectator feels that to take in a portion of London—for from no place, not even from the top of St. Paul's, though nearly in the centre, can the whole be taken in—is a task which requires, if I may so express myself, the putting forth of all his powers of vision.

But to give the reader a more definite idea

respecting the difference in the size of London and Paris, it may be right to mention a few facts connected with each of the two great cities. The number of houses in Paris is about 30,000; the number in London was, in 1835, 242,000, and cannot now be less than 250,000; being more than eight times that of Paris. In Paris, the number of streets is under 1250: in London it is considerably above 10,000. Again, the much greater breadth of the streets in London than those in Paris, contributes considerably to extend the area of the former city. The houses, too, in the metropolis of England, occupy a much greater extent of ground (considering they are so much inferior in height) than the houses in the metropolis of France. In short, the visitor to London feels, as he walks along its streets, as if there were no possibility of emerging from it, and getting into the open fields. No such feeling ever comes over the resident or stranger in Paris: there the consciousness is ever present with you, that be you in what por-

tion of the place you may—even if in its very centre—you can, by a twenty-five or thirty minutes' walk at a moderate pace, pass the barriers, and feast your eyes on the lovely landscapes with which the neighbourhood of the French capital abounds.

And not only does Paris appear a Lilliputian place as compared with the capital of this country; but in the article of architectural greatness, when both cities are viewed in the aggregate, the inferiority of the former to the latter is equally apparent. No one ever yet beheld the city and suburbs of London without being filled with admiration and amazement at the magnificent domes, and the towering monuments, columns, or spires, which everywhere meet the eye. In Paris you see scarce anything of this. The Pantheon, and the Hospital of Invalids, can each, it is true, boast of its imposing dome, and the steeples of two or three of the more celebrated churches, rise conspicuously above the mass of ordinary buildings; but beyond

these there is nothing to relieve the monotony which the summits of the Paris houses present. It is but right, however, to remark, that it was not always so. Before the Revolution of 1792, Paris had many noble buildings, whose steeples, spires, or domes, rose high above the level of the surrounding houses, and gave to the place a much more imposing appearance than it now presents. The work of destruction was not limited, during the Reign of Terror, to human life: many of the finest temples ever reared by the Catholic Church fell before the fury of that tremendous social tempest,—the most tremendous which ever swept over any portion of our planet.

It is right, however, to mention that though as compared with London, Paris is deficient in lofty domes and towering spires, it can boast of several public buildings superior to any of ours, with the single exception of St. Paul's. To these I shall refer in a future chapter.

The houses, too, have a much more imposing appearance than those of London.

In Paris there are no squares,—not, I mean, in the sense in which the word is generally understood by us. There are, it is true, several open places, somewhat resembling our squares; but these are public buildings,—the Louvre, for example—and not a series of houses inhabited by private families. The Grosvenor, the Belgrave, the Berkeley, the Portman, the Bryanstone, the Russell, and other squares of London, are wholly unknown in the French capital. It can, however, boast of several "places,"—some of them of a very imposing kind. Nothing, for instance, could be finer than the Place Vendome: it is the admiration of all who have seen it.

But of all the localities in Paris, there is none that gratifies the visitor so much as the Boulevards. The Boulevards may be said to constitute one great road or street, about three miles in length, and fully as broad as the broadest of our

streets. The Boulevards are divided into two departments—the northern and the southern. The northern Boulevards are twelve in number, and are much more magnificent than the southern, which are seven in number. The houses on either side of the northern Boulevards, especially on the right hand as you proceed towards their termination in the neighbourhood of the Madeline Church, are remarkably beautiful. Some of them are private residences, but most of them are cafés, restaurants, hotels, shops, &c. The aspect of the Boulevards, especially on a summer's evening, is singularly striking and pleasing. In front of all the cafés you see crowds of elegantly dressed men and women partaking of the grateful refreshment which these places supply, and looking, not with rude gaze, but with an expression of much gratification, at the streams of people who are slowly and softly gliding along the beautiful promenade before them. The interior of the countless shops displays the very perfection of taste as

regards the manner in which they are fitted up, and in which the various articles are arranged. Like all the better class of shops in the centre of Paris, they are not only brilliantly and most effectively lighted up inside, but in many cases, the windows and the articles are set off to peculiar advantage, by the lights outside, which, by means of glasses and other reflectors are made to throw a blaze of light on the whole place. The shops in the Boulevards, as in all the other principal streets of Paris, however small some of them may be, can boast of the presence of one or more elegantly dressed young women. The promenade on either side of this celebrated place is unusually broad. It cannot be less than from thirty-five to forty feet. It is, indeed, as broad as some of the leading streets in the centre of the city. Two rows of elm trees, fifteen or twenty feet apart, extend their whole length on either side of the Boulevards, and contribute much to their surpassing beauty; so that the person passing

hastily along the Boulevards, finds himself in a sort of avenue formed by trees in the middle of Paris. The trees vary in height, size, and appearance, which adds to the picturesqueness of the scene. The aspect of the place is at once rural and architectural, or rather presents an instance in which both the rural and architectural are happily blended. The pavement is formed of Asphalte materials; but the effect is somewhat impaired when the eye fixes on the ground, owing to a large circular patch of earth being left uncovered by the pavement around each tree, in order that its growth may not be retarded.—Some persons have expressed regret that the Boulevards, instead of having several turnings, should not run in a straight line. I altogether differ from those who entertain this opinion. The windings of this magnificent road contribute, in my judgment, very materially to its surpassing beauty. I consider, indeed, that the curvatures in the Boulevards impart to them their greatest charm. Only

imagine how cheerless and monotonous, comparatively speaking, the Boulevards would appear, did they extend for three miles in a straight line.

Between the Rue St. Honoré and the northern Boulevards, lies the Palais Royale. There is no part of Paris which is so constantly in the thoughts, or so frequently on the lips of the Parisian, as this locality. He thinks of it by day, and dreams of it by night. He regards it with all the fervour of affection with which a lover adores his mistress. It is in a sense mixed up with his very existence. Paris with all its attractions would be scarcely tolerable to him, were he denied access to the Palais Royale. Wherever the genuine Parisian is, whether in any other part of the city or in the provinces; whether at home or abroad, his thoughts and affections tend as surely to the Palais Royale, as the needle points to the pole. Death may tear an attached friend from his embraces, and he is

overwhelmed for a season with sorrow at his loss; but it is only for a season. Time heals the wound which the bereavement has inflicted, and he is himself again. It is otherwise if he be placed in circumstances which debar him from the Palais Royale. It is the heaviest calamity, the severest affliction which can befal him. The exclusion preys on his spirits and wears away his body. To those who have not been in Paris this may appear exaggeration; but it is not so. We all know the ascendancy which the love of country often acquires in the breast of a Scotchman or a Swiss, when circumstances have obliged him to reside in a foreign clime. The feeling at times so powerfully preys upon his mind as to impair his health. I know one instance, and there are many such most amply attested, in which a Scotch Highlandman in South America died from the excess of his love of country. The same ardent affection for the Palais Royale exists in the heart of a Parisian. I cannot say I know any particular case in which a Parisian,

doomed to settle in the provinces or abroad, has died of a broken heart, because exiled from his beloved Palais Royale; but I saw and heard enough, when in the French capital, of the Parisian's passionate fondness for that charming locality, to look on such an event as possible.

Those only who have been in Paris and know something of the French character, can at all comprehend how a Parisian's liking for the Palais Royale should assume this consuming passion. It is not the mere outward beauty of the place, though that, as I shall presently endeavour to show, surpasses anything to be met with either in Paris or London, or, I had almost said, in any other city in the world. It is the associations connected with the locality, more than anything else, which contribute to the production of this feeling of partiality for the Palais Royale.

Here he has been for a series of years in the habit of meeting kindred spirits,—persons so very familiar in their views, habits, practices, that

he and they seemed as much animated by one spirit, as if they had only had one soul among them. There he and they dined, drank coffee, sipped their glasses of brandy, smoked their cigars, and played at billiards and the draughts together, until they actually appeared part and parcel of each others being. No wonder then that the Parisian, who is forced to forego the exquisite enjoyment which he derived from these associations and exercises, should feel as if violence were done to his nature.

To describe the Palais Royale were impossible. The imagination cannot conceive anything in the centre of a great city at all like it. In most other cases the writer who attempts to sketch a scene, to which he feels himself unable to do justice, has the satisfaction of thinking that where he fails, the imagination of the reader will supply the deficiency. It is otherwise in this case: the most fertile fancy would fail to picture to itself what the Palais Royale is on a fine summer's evening. Its length

from outside to outside is little, if at all, short of a quarter of a mile, and the breadth cannot be much less than a furlong, or the eighth of a mile. In the centre are a great number of tastefully laid out trees of various kinds and various sizes. Portions of the ground have the rich appearance of an arbour; in the centre of all is a large fountain, which on particular nights sends up, from six or seven places, its waters twenty or twenty-five feet high. In the grounds, to the east and west of the fountain, are two parterres of matchless beauty. Immense crowds of persons dressed in the extreme of fashion, are always to be seen on a summer's evening, walking about the grounds, or along the splendid piazzas which surround them, while many hundreds more are to be seen sitting luxuriously on chairs, the men sipping their coffee or brandy, and the women eating their ices, or drinking their lemonade. You fancy you are in a second Eden, only that you see no growing fruit,—though, in the season, the

windows of the surrounding cafés are always full of the choicest sorts.

It will surprise the English reader to be informed, that among the immense concourse of persons thus occupied, or rather thus indulging in luxurious indolence, are to be seen many handsome and elegantly dressed women. The reader may probably infer that these women belong to the class of the unfortunates. The fact is otherwise; they are, or at least as far as is known, women of undoubted respectability. There they sit with their husbands, brothers, or fathers. From nine to ten o'clock on a summer's evening, the scene in the Palais Royale is picturesque in the highest degree: it realizes the most beautiful conceptions to be found in fairy tales. Only fancy thousands of people employed in the way I have described, on grounds laid out in the very best taste, and adorned with a variety of trees; fancy also that you see fountains playing in the middle, while the shops in the adjoining piazzas, and the

spacious and splendid apartments on the first and second floors are one vast blaze of brilliant light,—only fancy you see all this, and you will be able to form some, though a very imperfect idea of the singularly picturesque scene which the Palais Royale presents at a late hour on a fine summer's evening.

Having thus referred to the Boulevards and the Palais Royale, as the two most pleasant and most frequented lounges in Paris, I should next have been led to say something of the Tuileries —the most fashionable lounge of any—had I not, in the second chapter, endeavoured to give the reader some idea of it.

The Arcades of Paris ought not to be passed over in a chapter devoted to general observations on the place. They are much more tasteful in their architectural aspects than the arcades of London. You feel, too, that you can breathe more freely in them. In walking through our arcades in warm weather, you experience something of a suffocating sensation,

which makes you hurry out of them as fast as you can. In the Parisian arcades I never felt any sensation of this kind. They are not only light and lively in appearance, but efficiently ventilated. As regards the shops, again, those in the arcades of Paris are incomparably more pleasing to the eye than the shops in the arcades of London. The exquisite taste, to which I have before referred as so characteristic of the shops in the streets, is, if possible, still more strikingly displayed in the shops in the arcades. Here the taste and the fancy of the French appear in perfection. You might gaze at one of these shops for days together, and inspect every article in it in detail, and yet not be able to detect a single instance of defective taste. You can hardly believe, as you look at the windows, either that human hand has made the diversified articles which delight your eye, or that human hand has sufficed for the admirable manner in which they are arranged. You involuntarily associate the idea of fairy workmanship, and

fairy arrangement, with the more fanciful shops in the arcades of Paris. To see one of the better class of these arcades, when lighted up on a winter's evening, is a sight which, were it not to be had for nothing, people would most willingly pay to witness.

To some of the other more pleasant localities in and about Paris, I shall have occasion to make incidental references in a subsequent chapter. I will, therefore, devote what space remains of the present chapter to remarks of a more miscellaneous nature.

Though there be not in the French capital that formal division into aristocratic and humble localities, which there is in the English metropolis, it is not altogether without its distinctions of this character. The Faubourg St. Germain, which is on the southern side of the Seine, may be considered the West End, or most aristocratic part of Paris. It is there that all the old nobility of France have their town residences, or hotels, as they are generally called.

This part of the town is less densely populated than any other. So great, indeed, is the difference between the amount of the population in the Faubourg St. Germain and other localities, that the same extent of ground in other parts of Paris contains five or six times the number of inhabitants. The old nobility who reside in the Faubourg St. Germain, never go to court, being staunch adherents of Henry the Fifth. The Faubourg Rue St. Honoré, and Place Vendome, are chiefly tenanted by the present Court party. While in the Faubourg St. Germain, you rarely meet with a family of distinction, that does not repudiate the claims and deny the right of Louis Philippe to the throne, you will hardly find in the two last-mentioned localities—which, I ought to observe, lie towards the south-western extremity of Paris—a single person who is not a zealous supporter of the Citizen King. The Chaussee d'Antin, again, which is more centrically situated, is chiefly the abode of wealthy bankers. Farther north lies a considerable por-

tion of Paris, which is almost exclusively inhabited by the lowest and most criminal classes of the community. The part which the English prefer is the Champs Elysées; certainly at once the most beautiful and healthy locality in Paris. The Champs Elysées lie at the western extremity of Paris, commencing at the magnificent entrance of the Barrier l'Etoile, which I alluded to in my second chapter, and losing themselves in the splendours of the Tuileries. The same locality is also celebrated for ladies' boarding-schools. Indeed, you meet with few houses there that are not either boarding-schools, or the residence of English families.

There is nothing that strikes an Englishman with greater surprise, as he becomes acquainted with Paris, than the extent to which houses of the humblest and highest character are intermixed together. In London, there are whole districts in which the houses and their inmates are *all* of the lowest character. In other localities, again, you meet with nothing but magni-

ficent mansions, inhabited by the titled and the great. It is otherwise in Paris. There is scarcely a part of it in which, contiguous to the best houses, there are not some of the very meanest kind. You fix your eye on a particular house: it is an imposing building, and is the residence of one of the most distinguished families in France,—the descendants of those who, centuries ago, played a prominent part in their country's history. You look at the adjoining house: it has a most mean appearance, and is the abode of the families of various hard-working operatives.

But what still more astonishes the Englishman is, that some houses, which have no outward appearance, but, on the contrary, look like huge dead walls, with one great heavy-looking door, are the town residences of the richest and most influential men in Paris. An Englishman inquiring for one of the most wealthy and most celebrated men in the French capital, is directed to a particular house in a particular

street: he reaches the spot. A dark, dingy-looking wall, with a massy double door, with which he at once associates the idea of a prison, stares him in the face. He must have been misdirected: this cannot be the residence of the nobleman or gentleman whom he wishes to see. He inquires of some one in the street, and to his unspeakable amazement, finds that it is the residence of the party of whom he is in quest.

An incidental allusion has already been made to the circumstance of the houses in Paris being inhabited by a number of families. I am assured by those who have resided for many years in that capital, and who have the best means of information on such subjects, that there are not fifty houses in all the place which are inhabited by a single family. And the very few families (they are chiefly those of the old nobility) who do occupy houses for themselves, almost in every instance let them during the time—several months in the year—they retire to their country chateaus. What may appear most extraordi-

nary of all is, that when they do occupy their houses themselves, they often convert the upper stories into receptacles for hay and other provender for their horses.

Paris is not, like London, extending its limits every year. Building operations appear to be confined to the erection of new houses on old sites. The area of Paris has not been much enlarged for several years, and there seems to be little prospect of its being so for some years to come.

There is something peculiarly clear and dry in the atmosphere of Paris; it is also pure and pleasant. You never feel that sense of heaviness which is so common in our climate. In summer, the heat is considerably greater than with us; but then, on the other hand, the cold is much more intense than it is in this country. I can easily account for this from the singular clearness of the atmosphere. A Parisian winter is much shorter than with us. The period of extreme cold is usually about six weeks. The

Parisians have comparatively little snow; and when a quantity falls it rarely remains long on the ground.

Smoke is unknown: it is a commodity of which many of the Parisians can scarcely be said to have an idea. The beautiful line in one of the most beautiful of our ballads—

"I knew, by the smoke that so gracefully curl'd,"

would be wholly unintelligible to them. They would not be able to discern either poetry or meaning in it. Fogs, too, are unknown in Paris. The Parisians read of fogs in London, but never see them in their own city. The ideas they form of our fogs are often ludicrous in the highest degree. I was much amused at what some of them said to myself on this subject. Were they to be visited by one of our genuine November fogs, I am sure they would not wish to see a second. I am satisfied it would frighten the whole population from their propriety: they would fancy the world had come

to an end; and would deem it the happiest hour in their lives when the fog had thought proper to disappear.

It is a curious fact, that a house on fire is a spectacle very rarely seen in Paris. I met with persons far advanced in life, who never saw a house on fire in their lives. How few grown up persons are there in London of whom this could be said. The Parisians themselves jocularly ascribe the reason of there being so few fires in Paris, to the fact of there being so few houses insured. The meaning sought to be conveyed by this is, that because we insure so largely in England, people are less careful to guard against fire,—if, indeed, they be not guilty of actually setting their houses in a blaze. But, overlooking this piece of sarcasm, levelled at the national morality, as a thing we can afford to smile at, I cannot forbear expressing my surprise that fires should be almost unknown in Paris. One would, on the contrary, suppose that fires would be much more frequent, in proportion to the relative extent of

the population, in Paris, than in London,—owing to the circumstance of the fuel used by the Parisians consisting wholly, except in a very few instances, of wood; and to the fact that there are so many families in every house.

CHAPTER V.

GENERAL REMARKS ON THE PEOPLE.

Their dress—Beards and mustaches—French women as compared with English women—Cheerfulness of the Parisians—French politeness—Their social disposition—Prejudices against the English—French quickness of perception — Englishmen speaking bad French — The French misconceiving the English language.

ONE of the first things which a stranger remarks on his mingling with the people of Paris, is the tastefulness and quality of their dress. The Parisians are exceedingly fastidious in the article of apparel,—not only as to the way in which it is made, but as to the quality of the materials. There is scarcely an exception to this among those who are above the rank of

operatives; and even many of the latter, when their work is over, and they appear in the streets, are attired like gentlemen. It is, indeed, a very rare thing to see a ragged or dirty-looking person, male or female, in the streets of Paris. But of all parts of a Parisian's dress, that which he is most particular about is his hat. I am confident that any man might with safety bet, that out of every hundred hats you see on the heads of the pedestrians in Paris, not more than one or two will be found to be bad. A Frenchman seems to consider his "chapeau" a part of himself. He would just as soon be seen with an unwashed face as with a shabby hat. It is to him what a bonnet is to a lady. It is true, the Parisian gentlemen do not talk about their new hats as ladies do about their new bonnets; but they are not on that account, the less delighted when they see a beautiful "chapeau." A Frenchman would sooner receive a blow which would injure his head, than one which would damage his hat. He will pardon an

insult offered to himself, but he will never forgive you, if you destroy or injure his hat. The only occasion on which I ever saw a Frenchman abusive, during my stay in Paris, was when another person happened to sit down on his hat, and disturbed its wonted shape. Accidentally, though it evidently was, the proprietor of the hat waxed ungovernably indignant, and refused to be propitiated by the apologies and explanations which were promptly offered him.

Another feature in the physical aspect of the Parisians, which invariably attracts the eye of an Englishman, is the number of persons—men of course—who wear beards, or mustaches, or both. Our countrymen are more struck with this when they visit Paris, in consequence of the entire absence of these appendages to the lips and chin, in our own land. Here you may walk a whole day without encountering a single mustache or beard,—I mean of English growth: in Paris you cannot move a step in the streets without seeing them

in scores. With some persons, indeed, it is a question whether a majority of the male adult population do not wear either mustaches, or a beard, or both. I take the negative view. I admit that if you visit particular places—the Palais Royale, or any of the leading coffee houses, for instance,—and there form your opinion as to the proportion which unshaved lips and chins in Paris, bear to those daily visited by the razor,—you will be able to make out a case in favour of the former. But this would be an erroneous mode of settling the question. You must not judge of the population of Paris generally, either in this or any other matter, by those who are in the habit of frequenting these places. They principally consist of dandies and idlers,—persons who have mustaches or beards, because they have nothing else to do but to attend to their cultivation. To form a correct idea as to whether the patrons of beards and mustaches, or those who prefer a clean chin, be the more numerous, the way would be to

take those male persons you see in the more frequented streets. Mr. O'Connell talks of counting noses at the "monster meetings" in Ireland. I have never taken the trouble to count the bearded and unbearded chins when happening to see a mixed assemblage of Parisians; but I have had the curiosity to endeavour to form an opinion on the subject, by a glance of the eye,—just as a chairman at a public meeting forms an opinion by the show of hands, without counting them, as to whether the meeting be in favour or against a particular resolution. The conclusion at which I arrived was, as they say in the House of Commons, that the clear chins "had it." The mustached and bearded gentlemen, even when put together, were in a decided minority.

Another question connected with this point has sometimes been mooted, namely, whether the mustaches or the beards, be the more numerous. All my observation in Paris led me to the conclusion, that the mustached

gentlemen are much more numerous than the proprietors of beards. I should think there must be at least three mustaches for every beard.

The question whether beards or mustaches be most becoming, is one which often leads to animated discussions in Paris. I have heard opinions expressed on either side of the question, with all the gravity with which a decision is given from the judicial bench. I should feel disposed to give my vote in favour of the beards. I would do so on this intelligible ground—that I dislike compromises of any kind. And mustaches are nothing more than a compromise between nature and the barber,—homage being rendered to nature in allowing her to have her own way on the upper lip, while the interests of the barber are regarded by daily submitting the lower regions of the face to the operations of his razor. Men should be either one thing or another. I should be either for all beard or no beard,—either for a luxuriant crop of hair, or its entire absence. Nor is it the only

ground of my dislike of mustaches that I am opposed to all compromises: I think the preference is due to the full-grown beard on the ground of mere appearance. I know that in this as well as in all other matters, tastes, like doctors, will differ,—but that does not shake my faith in the conviction, that luxuriant beards are incomparably more manly than mustaches; which, for the most part are miserable stunted things,—excrescences which disfigure the human face, converting even the most handsome countenance into an object which no one can behold with pleasure.

It is gratifying to think that my views on this point are spreading with railroad rapidity. Those who have long resided in Paris assure me that the mustaches are every year diminishing in number, and that they promise, ere long, to become altogether extinct. So be it. In the provinces they are already comparatively rare. For one mustached gentleman your eyes encounter there, you meet with a half dozen in

Paris. They are now patronized by very few men of distinction. Louis Philippe has a decided aversion to them. None of his Ministers —none of them at least that I have seen—give them any countenance. On the judicial bench they are disowned, and among the "counsel at the bar," there certainly is not one in twenty that cultivates mustaches. Even our own Colonel Sibthorp, the member for Lincoln, has lost all conceit of his mustaches and rid himself of them. For the last two or three years he has caused the razor to make clean work of it, all over the 'ower part of his face. I am not aware whether any member of the House of Commons has formally congratulated the gallant Colonel on his improved taste, but I am sure they are one and all delighted with the change. The aspect of his countenance has certainly improved full fifty per cent. by the disappearance of his mustaches.

To see beards in perfection, you should look in at the coffee houses in the Rue St. Honoré, any

evening after dark. Beards, so far as my observation extended, are both more numerous and of a better order, in this locality, than in any other part of Paris. Indeed, I have never, with one exception, anywhere seen specimens of beards which could be compared with those which are to be nightly witnessed in the Rue St. Honoré. The exception to which I allude is in the case of a countryman of our own. I allude to Mr. Muntz, the member for Birmingham. In the whole course of my travels on the Continent, or elsewhere, I have met with no one who could boast the ownership of a beard more ample in its dimensions, or that appeared to be in a more thriving condition, than that which is the property of the Member for Birmingham. But I have, perhaps, dwelt too long on this topic. Let me, therefore, now proceed to other topics,—commencing with the ladies of Paris.

The French women are not, in my opinion, to be compared, in the article of beauty, to the women of England. In all matters pertaining

to the toilet, they are, I admit, entitled to the precedence. They seem to have reduced the art of dressing to something like mathematical precision. Out of the least promising details they produce a striking whole. A French girl will appear not only smartly, but elegantly attired, by the skilful arrangement of materials which, in the hands of an English girl, could not be made to assume anything having the slightest pretensions to form. But while an immeasurable superiority must be conceded to the French women in all affairs of the toilet, the English women are far above them in point of personal beauty. The difference between the women of the two countries may be expressed in a single sentence,—Nature has done everything for the English; while, in the case of the French, art has interposed to remedy the defects of nature. The English women are born beauties; the French, by means of their exquisite taste in dressing, invest themselves with adventitious charms. No unbiassed observer can enter a

church, a theatre, or ball-room, without being struck with the decided superiority, in this respect, of the English women to those of France. The women of the latter country, it is true, cannot be brought to make this admission. They are willing to allow that the English have finer and fairer complexions; but then they maintain that there is a visible want of expression in their countenances. They say that there is neither animation nor intelligence in the eyes of English ladies; and that the cast of their countenances altogether, is exceedingly heavy if not stupid. That there is more fire in the eye of a French lady, and more of her soul in her face, than you can discover in the eye or the countenance of an English woman, cannot be denied by any one who has been in the capitals of the two countries. But the question comes to be, whether these qualities may not be too prominently impressed on the human countenance. I am inclined to adopt the affirmative view. I can conceive it possible, that the effect of a handsome

face and fine figure may be much impaired by an excessive liveliness of manner, such as is sometimes observable among the French women. Their countenances, in the majority of instances, want what those of the English women are remarkable for their possession of—dignity and repose. And yet, though I hold that these observations are just in reference to their general application, it is not to be denied that many of the French women are singularly handsome. I have seen some of their number, who, in point of beauty of face and symmetry of form, are not to be surpassed by the women of this or any other country. When I say that the English are superior to them, I simply mean, that if we take at random a given number of English ladies, and the same number of French ladies, a far greater amount of beauty will be found in the former than in the latter assemblage of the sex.

I have alluded to the effect which the tasteful manner in which the Parisian women dress has

in improving their personal appearance: their deportment contributes very much to the same end. There is an ease and elegance in their manners wholly unknown among the women of England. The stiffness which in this country is everywhere observable in society, except in those instances in which particular friends meet together, is utterly unknown in France. Here it is thought the perfection of manners, or rather an exhibition of superior dignity, to be cold, stiff, and formal to all whom one meets with in general society. Every word is carefully weighed; sentences are spoken with as much caution and deliberation as if the whole conversation were to appear in next morning's papers. Sometimes the greatest difficulty is felt by a stranger to keep up the conversation at all: he has literally, in many cases, to extort, by means of direct questions, the few words which are spoken by the lady beside whom he happens to sit. All is forced and formal; even the very nod or inclination of the head by

which she silently assents to something you have said. She is bound in the fetters which a cold, miserable etiquette has forged for her; and he who is seemingly carrying on conversation with her—for there can be no *real* conversation in such a case—is all the while in a perfect agony, because he is placed in a position which requires him to say something, while he feels that he dare not give play to his natural feelings, and speak as he would do to an intimate friend. The woman, indeed, who would resign herself to the impulses of a generous nature, and speak with the freedom and unreserve which these impulses would dictate, would run the risk of having very unpleasant constructions put on her conduct, and would be regarded as one who had committed an unpardonable sin against the class of society with whom she was accustomed to associate. To have a heart, or rather to betray a heart, in her intercourse with fashionable society, would not only be deemed "horrid vulgar," but would be consi-

dered a sufficient reason for sending the transgressor against the miserable conventionalisms of society, to the Siberian regions of private life.

It is far otherwise in France; there all is ease and unreserve. No artificial restraint is put on the women any more than on the men. They are, in their intercourse with society, restrained by nothing but that innate sense of propriety, by which every person of a well-constituted mind is always sure to regulate his conduct. The moment you are introduced into French society, you feel as much at your ease as if you were in the company of those who had been your most intimate friends through life. You find a French lady as easy and as agreeable the first occasion on which you are in her society, as if you had been on terms of intimate friendship with her for a series of years. I ascribe very much of the fascinations of the French women, to this desire and this facility of making themselves agreeable.

There are, no doubt, exceptions to this as to

every other rule. There are, doubtless, instances to be met with in which French women are proud, distant, and formal in their demeanour. I can only say, that no such instances,—not even one,—came under my observation in the course of my visit to France; and had they been common I must have seen or heard of some of them.

No one can have mixed in French society without being struck with the singularly fine carriage of the women. They walk with an elegance and elasticity of step which contribute very considerably to enhance their personal attractions. In this respect they are unapproachable by the women of any other country. Walking seems to be reduced, among the Parisian ladies, to a science; and so highly is "an elegant carriage in their walk"—to use their own expression—esteemed in France, that it is generally preferred, by our sex, to beauty of face or symmetry of form. Without a graceful deportment—a word which, in France, denotes

both a person's address and style of walking—a handsome face is held in no very high estimation. And where there is this elegant deportment, a lady with a very plain face is considered a superior person.

The question is often asked, how happens it that the French women are so far before the women of all other countries in their style of walking? One of two answers is generally given to the question. Some persons account for the fact, from the circumstance of their streets being so badly paved and of their consequently being obliged, in passing along the streets, to make those short, quick steps, which are so much admired in their walking. This cannot be the reason, because in many towns in England, Scotland, and Ireland, the causeway is as rough and the pavement as bad, as in Paris; and yet we see nothing of the light, graceful, elastic mode of walking among the women of our provincial towns, which is the admiration of all foreigners who visit Paris.

The other usual mode of accounting for the Frenchwomen's mode of walking is, to attribute it to the absence of carpets in the Parisian houses, and the circumstance of the floors being constantly rubbed over with soap, which renders them very slippery to walk on. This cannot be the right hypothesis any more than the other; for it is a well ascertained fact, that English ladies who have gone to reside in Paris when they were very young, and before their style of walking could have been formed, hardly ever acquire that elegance of carriage and elasticity of step, which all admire so much in the Parisian ladies. My own theory is, that the graceful walk of the French women is the result of that lightness of heart, which is so marked a characteristic in the French character, and most of all in female character.

The cheerfulness of the French, wherever and under whatever circumstances you meet them, is among the first things to strike the mind of an Englishman. You see hilarity in every coun-

tenance, and vivacity in every step. They are all life and animation. There is so much of the mercurial in their manner, and of cheerfulness in their countenances, that you at once set them down as the happiest race of beings on the earth. No one ever yet saw—at least, I never did—a demure, hypochondriacal Parisian. An expression of cheerfulness always irradiates his countenance. He lives in an atmosphere of perpetual light-heartedness. No care ever clouds the Frenchman's brow: happen what will, his cheerfulness never forsakes him. The most gloomy objects in the world create no gloomy feelings in him. Place a rope round his neck, or even show him the guillotine which is about to operate upon him, and still you see an expression of cheerfulness in his face. With me it is a question whether a Frenchman can put on a long and lugubrious countenance. If he can, he must look extremely unnatural with it: his face must have the appearance of something not in character. The stranger would, in the supposed

case, fancy that he had procured another face for the occasion; borrowing it from the English or Dutch, or the people of some other country possessing an unenviable reputation for the demure expression of their countenances. The Parisians are, I repeat, a remarkably light-hearted and lively-looking people. And, as cheerfulness is said to be contagious, it often communicates itself unconsciously to those who never before knew what an hour's real enjoyment was. All the English at home concur in saying, that when one of their number returns to his own locality, after a residence of some length in France, he has become a much more cheerful man, and exhibits much more pleasantness in his general conduct, than he did before quitting his own country. A demure, melancholy-looking Frenchman would be an anomaly. He would be deemed quite a natural curiosity; and people would flock in crowds to see the "man monster."

The English song commencing with, "Come,

let us drive dull care away," would be altogether unintelligible in France. They could not drive away that which never paid them a visit. Possibly some one may suppose that the fact of so many suicides being committed in Paris, somewhat militates against the remarkable and almost universal cheerfulness which I am ascribing to the French. It may in appearance, but not in reality. In this country, we associate with the commission of suicide the idea of long-continued previous mental distress, until life has at last become insupportable. It is otherwise in France. There they commit suicide from the most trivial causes. The slightest disappointment is followed by a leap into the Seine,—thus ending at once the disappointment and the party's life. A Frenchman contemplates suicide as coolly as he does lying down on his bed, when the labours or amusements of the day are over. Even, therefore, when in the very act of committing suicide, the Frenchman retains, to a certain extent, his wonted cheerfulness of character.

When in Paris, I accidentally had an opportunity of seeing the bodies of two persons who had committed suicide; and if before they destroyed themselves their features were as composed, and the entire expression of their countenances was as tranquil, as after they had committed the deed, no one would have discovered in them an exception to that aspect of cheerfulness which is so marked a characteristic of the French.

The Parisians are a singularly sociable people. Existence would be intolerable to them, were they doomed to live in even comparative seclusion. Those of them on whom their avocations impose the necessity of being detached from masses of their fellow-citizens for a few hours a day, are only enabled to bear up under the privation, by the prospect of meeting with multitudes in the evening, in the Palais Royale, the Boulevards, the theatres, or the coffee-houses. A Frenchman cannot conceive the possibility of being happy in retirement. All that he reads in romances about people's partiality for se-

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cluded cottages and sequestered vales, he ascribes to the imagination of the writer,—whom he sets down as a person of miserable taste, and as wholly ignorant of human nature. Frenchmen must meet in numbers in order to enjoyment. A Parisian's dinner would lose half its relish, if he were compelled to eat it alone. Were the solitary and silent system of prison discipline, which Sir Peter Laurie and others have been so anxious to see adopted in this country, introduced into the prisons of France, it would have the inevitable effect of causing all the prisoners, who had the means in their power, to commit suicide, and of driving the remainder into incurable madness.

There was nothing I met with during my stay in France that grieved or surprised me more, than the strong prejudices which everywhere prevail against England and the English. I had been prepared for this among the lower and less informed part of the population, but I certainly did not expect to meet with much of it among

the educated classes of society. Strange to say, however, the feeling is almost as general among them as among the most ignorant of the Parisians. It is true that to Englishmen, individually, the French show the very greatest attention, and treat them with the greatest kindness; but the English, as a people, and England, as a country, are regarded by them with the most marked dislike. There is something very anomalous—something very difficult to understand in this. It is strange that the French should exhibit so strong an aversion to the English, as a people, and yet evince the utmost partiality to them in their individual capacity. Still the fact is as I have mentioned. I content myself with stating it; it is for others, who have more leisure than I can command, to endeavour to account for or explain the seeming paradox. Not only the most unjust, but most ridiculous things imaginable, are said of England, and believed by the better-informed orders of French society. Nothing, indeed, could be so tran-

scendant in absurdity as not to be believed, if alleged against the English. I have sometimes, in fact, thought that the more legibly the supreme absurdity of a charge against this country was written on its face, the greater would be the probability of its being swallowed by the Parisians. I was in Paris during the Queen's visit to France; and many of the reports then put gravely into circulation, not only by "The National" and other papers, but by private individuals, were really of so superlatively absurd a nature, that one would have thought it impossible for human credulity, however great, to digest them. And yet the French, with all their acuteness and all their intelligence, do swallow these colossal absurdities as readily as if the reports were truth itself. This is most deeply to be regretted on the part of both countries. Both suffer from it in their respective moral influence, and in their commercial interests. It has the effect of keeping up that spirit of jealousy, rivalry, and enmity, which has existed in both

countries a great deal too long. Providence has placed England and France in such relative situations, as clearly show that they were meant to be on a friendly footing with each other. They are the two greatest countries on the face of the earth. United and friendly they might bid defiance to the world, and exercise a moral influence over all the nations of the earth, of the mightiest and most beneficial kind. It would be the manifest interest of both to cultivate a perfect community of feeling—to understand each other on all the great questions of the day, and to act in concert whenever the position of public affairs might require their co-operation. I would appeal, on this point, to the editors of the newspaper press in France. They can influence the public mind to an extent far surpassing the influence exercised on public opinion by the newspaper press of this country. The journalists of France, were they to apply themselves to the task, would be able in a very short time to banish all the existing prejudices against

England from the minds of their countrymen. England has no such prejudices against France. England admires many of the traits in the French character, and is most desirous of cultivating a good understanding with France. Past differences, former animosities, should now, by mutual consent, be buried in oblivion. The opinion alluded to by Addison, in the "Spectator," as being very generally entertained in his day, that France and England were natural and irreconcileable enemies, has long ceased to be entertained in this country. The conviction now universal amongst us is, that they are natural friends, and ought to be united together in indissoluble bonds. England pants for such a union: all that is wanting to its being formed is the concurrence of France itself.

But while none can be more sensible than ourselves of the utter groundlessness of those suspicions which the French entertain against us, and while we show that we entertain no unfriendly feelings towards them, we are not sure

whether our metropolitan newspapers have, at all times, shown that forbearance, in dealing with their prejudices, with which we ought to regard a generous, though, in this respect, mistaken people. We are too apt to reply in an angry spirit to the charges they prefer against us, without making due allowance for the peculiar circumstances in which France has been so often placed. We ought to remember that the French are an injured people, and that the injuries which have been done to them have been too often aggravated by gratuitous insults. Nor must we conceal from ourselves that we took an active part—indeed, without our aid it could not have been effectual—in that foreign interference, by means of which the obnoxious Bourbons were twice foisted upon the French at the point of the bayonet. With the recollection of this fact yet fresh in their minds, it is no wonder if they still look upon us with a prejudiced eye. We can hardly blame them for their sensitiveness on the subject of our interference in the war which

terminated in 1815,—since, if there be any one point, in reference to our past policy, on which Englishmen are now more agreed than another, it is in denouncing that interference as most iniquitous and unjust. And, verily, we have received our reward. We are now reaping the bitter fruits of our folly and our guilt. If the French have suffered in military reputation by the issue of the late war, we are suffering no less severely in our pockets. Look at the hundreds of millions which it has added to our national debt,—the very interest of which at times menaces the country with bankruptcy. The lesson which this has taught us will be a useful one. And it will be beneficial to others as well as to ourselves. There is little danger of England ever again gratuitously taking a part in the quarrels of other countries. When they fall out they will be allowed, so far as we are concerned, to adjust their own differences in their own way.

France, therefore, if she would only bring

herself calmly to consider the matter, would at once perceive that England can have no inducement in any way ever again to interfere in her affairs, foreign or domestic. Even supposing that any Minister were unprincipled enough, and mad enough, to propose such an interference, the very proposal would raise a storm of indignation in the country, which would not only frustrate his purpose, but sweep himself from the helm of public affairs.

We are satisfied that if a representation of the real state of English feeling towards France were only placed before the people of that country in a cool and dispassionate manner, their generous minds would be open to conviction, and all their prejudices and jealousies regarding England would instantly vanish. Our error has been that, irritated by what we knew to be the injustice of the accusations brought against us by the French, we have repudiated these charges in a tone and manner very unbecoming our high character. And this acerbity of feeling has only

had the effect of adding fuel to the very suspicions and jealousies which, because we felt them to be entirely groundless, we were so anxious to banish from the minds of our neighbours. We trust the day is not distant—and we fancy that we can see some glimmerings of its near approach—when the two countries will be united in the indissoluble bonds of a cordial friendship.

The French have long been proverbial for their politeness; and this national characteristic is still preserved in all its pristine perfection. Wherever you go you are received with a measure of attention of which you had no experience, and could have had none, before you put your foot on French ground. There is something exceedingly fascinating in the politeness of the higher classes of French society; though for the first few days the Englishman feels rather oppressed than gratified by it. You never meet with a Frenchman who does not take off his hat, and make to you a succession of low

bows. When he shakes you by the hand, he does it with both his hands; and if he had all the hands of Briarus, he would put every one of them in requisition in expressing the delight he feels at meeting with you. Politeness is a science with the French, if, indeed, it be not an instinct of their nature. Metaphysicians have wasted reams of paper, and expended gallons of ink, in the discussion of the question, whether or not there be innate ideas. We all know the opinions of Locke and other celebrated writers on this point. I express no opinion either way, because I am no metaphysician; and if I were, it is quite possible that my opinion would be entitled to no more consideration than the opinions of hosts of philosophers who have gone before me. But if there be such a thing as intuitive dispositions, the disposition to be polite must be natural to the French. An Englishman who has not been in France, can have no conception of the extent to which the practice of politeness is carried. A gentleman

never meets a lady in any retired place, though a perfect stranger to her, without taking off his hat, and making his most respectful obeisance. When entering the coffee shops, eating houses, or other public establishments which gentlemen have occasion to visit, the first thing a Parisian does on crossing the threshold, is to take off his hat to the female who presides in these places, as a sort of goddess, at a small tasteful desk. And, as if once were not sufficient, he repeats his obeisance as he quits the premises. The very perfection of politeness is, indeed, everywhere displayed to men as well as to women. Gentlemen who were in the habit of coming daily into the shop in which I was shaved, always took off their hats and made a low bow to "Monsieur Tonsor." This struck me as ludicrous in the highest degree. The barber, however, it is to be presumed, saw nothing ludicrous in it; no doubt he thought it all exceedingly proper. I have often wondered how the French demean themselves towards one

another when they quarrel. One would think it impossible to observe the orthodox rules of good breeding when the blood is up; and yet, if any body could, the Frenchman is that person. I know an Englishman who prides himself on the "gentlemanly way" in which he can say the rudest things to any one with whom he comes into collision. "You, in effect, called Mr. Hanson a scoundrel," remarked a friend, speaking to the gentleman to whom I allude, after an end had been put to an altercation with another party. "I know I did, and I meant it too; but then I did it in so gentlemanly a way, that he could not have taken offence at what I said." I can conceive, in like manner, a Frenchman confessing that he committed murder, but seriously contending that, as he had done the deed politely, his victim had no reason to complain.

Not only is the Frenchman polite, but he seems to be raised to the third heaven of happiness when you ask him to direct you to any place to which you may be destined. His eye actually

lightens up with ecstacy, and an expression of supreme delight comes over his countenance, at the thought of having it in his power to be of service to you. The conviction has pressed itself on my mind, until it has become a settled hypothesis which no philosophy on earth can disturb, that you do an act of positive, though cheap benevolence, to a Frenchman, when you ask his aid in your inquiries after particular persons or places. I am not sure whether or not I mentioned in any of my former works, the fact that I once knew a Scotch shopkeeper who was so devoted an admirer of Cobbett's "History of the Reformation," that he felt infinitely more gratified when any one asked a reading of that work, than if they had purchased the one half of his shop. I feel assured that the Frenchman, in like manner, would feel much happier at having an opportunity of furnishing you with the information you desire, than if you were to patronize him in whatever line of business he may happen to be. It is a legitimate subject for

discussion, whether it would not be an act of real benevolence to establish a society for the express purpose of sending over to Paris a constant succession of raw Englishmen, wholly unacquainted with the French language and Parisian localities, in order that our neighbours might have the unspeakable happiness of aiding them in their inquiries. Of this I am satisfied, that many societies have been set on foot, professing to be philanthropic, whose benevolence was a much more questionable point.

I have already mentioned, by implication, that French politeness is not confined to the educated or middle classes of society; nor is it even limited to the artizans and mechanics; it is practised by the humblest as well as the highest classes of the community. The least polished workman in Paris—least polished I mean in other respects—is, in this respect, a model for imitation. Go where you will, you never meet with any one bearing the form of man, who does not address you not only with

respect, but with an ease and elegance which it would have done the heart of Chesterfield good to witness.

And not only are the French patterns of politeness to their superiors; they are quite as much so to their equals. The commonest mechanic addresses his brother mechanic as "Monsieur," and all his female acquaintances as "Madame," or "Mademoiselle," just as the party happens to be married or single. If a scavenger accidently meets a servant of all work in the streets, when going out to enjoy a holiday, something like this dialogue will take place:—

"Ah! Mademoiselle, how are you?"

"Quite well, thank you, how is Monsieur?"

"Which way is Mademoiselle going?"

"Not any way in particular, Monsieur."

"Would Mademoiselle like to go to the Champs Elysées?"

"If it be agreeable to Monsieur."

"Would Mademoiselle like to have a peach?"

looking at the fruit stall of an old woman at the side of the street.

"Oh, Monsieur is very kind."

Robert accordingly purchases a few peaches and hands them to Susan, who again thanks him with a fluency and gracefulness of speech of which we have no examples among the lower classes of this country, and which could hardly be surpassed by the better and more refined orders of society.

And yet, notwithstanding the perfect and thoroughly systematic politeness of the French, there is one little respect in which (and that, too, in a case in which the fair sex are concerned) a Parisian gentleman grievously fails. I allude to the fact, that in walking along the streets, he rarely steps off the pavement to allow a lady to pass, when it is found that there is no room for both. She is compelled to make way for him unless she is prepared to run the risk of being jostled into the gutter adjoining the kerb-stone, in the collision that ensues. I re-

member having somewhere seen this fact stated a few years ago, but having heard so much of French politeness, I was unwilling to believe it. It is nevertheless true; and any one who will take the trouble of putting its accuracy to the test, will see it abundantly verified. The ladies themselves seem so conscious of it, that they are to be seen stepping off the pavement several yards before they meet with a gentleman with whom they might come into collision.

The proverb tells us that there is an exception to every rule. We must not, therefore, wonder that there should be an exception to French politeness. We must not be surprised if a people who are, in all other respects, perfect patterns of politeness, should come short of that quality in a solitary instance.

The question has often been mooted, whether there is any sincerity in the politeness of the French; and a negative conclusion has generally been come to. I am disposed to take the affirmative side of the question. I feel assured that

there is much real kindness in the French character. Were the Frenchman's politeness confined to mere words, it might fairly be doubted how far it was sincere; but when it is extended to deeds, I think it is equally uncharitable and unjust to entertain any suspicions on the subject. I met with so many instances of what I would call substantial politeness when in Paris, that I cannot for a moment doubt that the politeness of the French character rests on a substratum of kindly feeling. I will mention only one of these instances. I contrived one day, though unacquainted with the French language, to convey to the occupant of a small cobbler's shop, a knowledge of the fact that I wished to go to a particular street, but was ignorant of the way. For several seconds the Parisian Crispin listened with breathless attention to my incomprehensible jargon—which certainly was neither French, nor English, nor anything else—evidently eager to catch a glimpse of my meaning. He eventually succeeded; and the moment he

did so, he flung down the shoe which he was cobbling at the time, and leaping out of his little stall, conducted me far enough on my way to enable him to point out the street I wanted. Will any one tell me that there was no sincerity, no real kindness, in the feeling that prompted this? How different would have been the conduct of an Englishman in similar circumstances. He would not have condescended to raise his head from his work, but would have growled out some such answer as this: "The first turning to the left, and the second to the right;" and there, so far as he was concerned, would have been an end of the matter. This cobbler was a fair specimen of his countrymen generally. And as no one can have been a single day in Paris without being struck with the exceeding and universal politeness of the people, neither do I see how any man can have mingled in French society without being satisfied that there is kindliness in their politeness. I am not prepared to say that a Frenchman would be found

to be all in reality which he is in appearance; that would be expecting too much of human nature in any country. But I do maintain, that there is not only more of a sincere desire to please among the French, than among any other people on the face of the earth, but that they will put themselves to more inconvenience to gratify or serve a stranger than any other nation in the world. I hold, indeed, that the very extravagance of the compliments which they pay to strangers, and the very excess of their politeness to them, are to be regarded as proofs of their desire to please; which desire, I contend is, in itself, conclusive evidence of real kindness of heart. Nor am I sure that Frenchmen do not, for the moment, delude themselves into the idea that we deserve all the fine things they say of us, though we are conscious that they are wholly unmerited. An English gentleman whom I met with in Paris mentioned to me, that a short time ago he was urgently solicited to become one of the patrons

of a French literary society newly established. He consented; and, as in duty bound, attended its next meeting. He is a man of very high standing in Paris, both among the French and English; but has never written anything to entitle him to the name of author, beyond one or two small pamphlets. The secretary of the society, however, congratulated the members on the accession of a new patron, "a man of the very highest reputation in the literary world, and the author of various elaborate works, displaying a variety and depth of erudition which had rarely been equalled." The object of this extravagant eulogy, assured me that he never felt so confounded in his life. He could not have been more so had the house fallen about his ears. He felt a burning sensation suddenly come over his face; his eyes were all at once bereft of the power of vision; he knew not where he was, or what had happened. When the meeting was over, he waited on the secretary, and earnestly remonstrated with him

on the very unpleasant consequences produced by the most unexpected, and certainly most undeserved, eulogium he had pronounced upon him. "I am not," he continued, "the author of anything but a trifling pamphlet or two, which nobody ever saw except a few private friends, and which was never heard of beyond the circumference of my own little circle; you may then guess what were my feelings of surprise and confusion, when you described me as one of the most celebrated, most learned, and most voluminous writers of the day." "Sare," said the Frenchman, who was fond of speaking to Englishmen in their own language, to the best of his ability, "Sare, par-don; it's our vay." The compliment, in other words, though wholly unmerited, was the result of genuine kindliness of heart, and a sincere desire to please. And I should suppose it very likely that the Frenchman, in the overflowings of his disposition to please the new patron, expressed himself in the above extravagant terms without

being at the moment conscious that there was any exaggeration in them.

The French are a fickle people. They are quite the creatures of impulse,—more so, perhaps, than any other nation in the world. On their fickleness in political matters, I shall afterwards have occasion to remark. The same changeableness is visible in all the relations of private life. They form resolutions as if it were only for the purpose of abandoning them. They no sooner come to a particular conclusion than they quarrel with it, and run into the opposite opinion or feeling. They commence an undertaking, and get heartily tired of it before it is finished: probably it is never finished at all. To-day the death of some friend plunges them into the deepest distress: to-morrow they are as cheerful and light-hearted as if no such friend had ever existed. Their feelings are powerfully affected for the moment, but it is only for a moment. The very extremity, indeed, of their joy or sorrow forbids its permanency.

You see the tears gushing from their eyes this moment, and hear them laughing immoderately the next. They can devotedly love to-day, and be supremely indifferent to-morrow. The author, or statesman, or other public man they detested last week, is the object of their idolatry the next. They are not to be relied on. They are perfectly sincere and warm in their attachments during the time they exist, but as the slightest circumstance of a generous, or amiable, or patriotic kind, suffices to excite their admiration and regard, so the most unimportant incident is sufficient to extinguish that admiration and convert that regard into an opposite feeling. I am here, of course, speaking of the French as a people. There are numerous honourable exceptions in individual cases, to my remarks. On this point I shall say something more in a subsequent chapter.

The Parisians are remarkable for their quickness of perception. Whether it be that they are skilful physiognomists, or that they can

boast of a peculiar susceptibility of ear, is a question which I cannot determine; but no Englishman who has had much intercourse with them can fail to have been struck with the singular readiness with which they discover his meaning, when expressing himself in his own language. They seem to discover his wants and wishes, as if by a species of intuition. Only place a Frenchman and Englishman together, each entirely unacquainted with the other's language, and you will invariably find that the Frenchman understands the Englishman before the latter comprehends the Frenchman. Compared with our lively neighbours we are a dull nation,—a people exceedingly slow in our perceptions. Let an Englishman express his more urgent and more common wants in any terms he will, the Frenchman is sure immediately to comprehend him. It is otherwise when the Frenchman who knows nothing of English has to make known his wants to us. If a Frenchman, unacquainted with the English

tongue, were to wait for his dinner until a waiter, unacquainted with the French language, understood what he said, he would certainly have to wait for weeks and months. There is, however, no danger of an Englishman starving in Paris, however ignorant he may be of the French language. A Parisian will discover in a moment that he is hungry, and wants his dinner. I never yet knew an instance in which an Englishman had to complain of suffering the privation of a meal because he could get no one to understand him, when asking for something to eat. While on this subject I may mention, that nothing surprised me more, in my intercourse with Frenchmen, than the circumstance of so few of them being able to speak English. Of course, I did not expect I should meet with many of those who are engaged in the more common avocations of life in France, who would be able to converse in the English language; but I had an impression which, I am confident, is general in this country, that at all

events, a goodly number of literary men,—men celebrated for their literary attainments, and who make literature a profession,—would be at least able to express themselves in intelligible, though it might be incorrect English. My experience in Paris undeceived me. I met with some of the most eminent literary characters in France,—with authors, reviewers, editors of daily papers, members of the Chamber of Deputies, and distinguished teachers in distinguished schools, and in only one or two instances could they speak, or understand when spoken, a word of English. Now, I will undertake to say, that very few men belonging to either of these bodies, would be found in England who do not know at least a little of the French. Whether an Englishman would not fare better in Paris did he know nothing at all of the French language, than when his knowledge is limited, is another matter. I know some Englishmen who would have acted much wiser, if instead of trusting to their own fancied know-

ledge of the French tongue, they had adopted my plan of always expressing their wants and wishes through the medium of an interpreter,—a class of persons who are to be had at all hotels for half-a-crown per half day, or for five francs (four shillings and two pence) for an entire day. The gentlemen to whom I refer were furnished with experimental proof of the truth of Pope's remark, that "a little learning (a little knowledge of the French language) is a dangerous thing." One gentleman who meant to make a particular inquiry of a shopkeeper he saw standing at his door, put, with that view, what he thought the proper question to the Parisian.

How accurately the Englishman expressed himself in French may be understood from the fact, that the Frenchman very politely directed him to a place which shall be nameless, but which he had no intention of visiting.

Another Englishman, who had, during nearly the whole time of his journey from London,

been a most exemplary student of one of those small French and English conversation books, which profess to enable those who previously knew nothing of French, to speak their way through France with the greatest ease after a few hours' perusal,—entered a restaurant, (which is synonymous with dining rooms here) and took his seat at the table. Proud of his fancied knowledge of French, he would hardly take time to draw his breath before bawling out "*Garçon!*" meaning the waiter.

A spruce young man standing in the middle of the room, with a towel under his arm, instantly responded, "*Oui, Monsieur—*" "Yes, sir." And such was William's eagerness to serve his new customer, that he placed himself by his side almost as soon as the words had escaped his lips.

He inquired of the waiter what he had got, and the latter very summarily and satisfactorily answered the question, by thrusting into his hand a bill of fare, made up in the form of

a pocket memorandum book, of the duodecimo size.

"*Qui vous faut il, Monsieur*"—(what will you have, sir?) inquired the waiter, in the plenitude of his desire to minister to the cravings of his customer's stomach, before the latter had had time to inspect in detail the list of good things set before him.

"*Je prendrai de la soupe pour commencer*," I'll take soup to commence with), answered the other.

Tres-bien, Monsieur," said Guillaume, (William) starting off to supply the wants of his English patron.

The soup was brought with praiseworthy promptitude.

"*Garçon*," said the Englishman after a moment's pause, in tones sufficiently loud to be heard by all in the place, "*Garçon, donnes moi un escalier*." The waiter looked amazed, and all present shared in the feeling. Could he credit the evidence of his ears? He resolved on

answering his own question, by putting another to his English customer. "What is it you asked for, Monsieur?" "*Un escalier*," thundered the other, in still more stentorian tones than before.

All eyes were now directed to the Englishman. And it was easy to perceive, if there be language in looks, that those present unanimously came to the conclusion that he was insane. The waiter was doubly confounded. He alternately looked at his customer and at a stair-case which communicated with a room on the first floor,—the scene having occurred on the ground floor.

"Why don't you bring it me at once?" resumed the Englishman in an angry tone.

"*Il faut que vous vous trompiez, Monsieur.*" (You must be mistaken, Sir) suggested the waiter mildly.

"Not at all; don't you see," looking at the soup, and at the neighbourhood of the bason

which contained it; "don't you see I'm not mistaken?"

Still William would not be convinced; he made no sign of any intention to bring his customer the desired article. He continued to stand as motionless, as if he had been transfixed to the spot.

"Confound the fellow! what does he mean?" muttered the other in unexceptionable English.

"I think, sir," interposed an Irishman, who was sitting at an adjoining table, "that you have asked for the wrong thing?"

"Oh, not at all, I asked for an *escalier*, a spoon, to take my soup with."

"*Escalier*, sir, means a stair-case, and you have been asking all this time for a stair-case. You have mistaken the word for '*Cuiller*,' which signifies a spoon."

The other looked confusion personified. A spoon was brought him; he hurriedly chronicled his soup, hastily partook of some other

dishes that were set before him, and left the place, "registering a vow," as he went along, that he would never again, till the last moment of his existence, attempt to speak a syllable of French.

Still more ludicrous perhaps was the blunder which another Englishman made a few months ago. Entering a restaurant, and ordering, as he thought, a particular dish for his wife and a different one for himself, he contrived to make the extraordinary mistake of asking the waiter to bring a mirror for his wife and a coffin for himself.

The French themselves, though as before remarked, exceedingly quick in the majority of cases, in discerning the meaning of Englishmen when speaking imperfect French, often commit very grievous mistakes when they attempt to carry on conversation with the English in their own tongue. Some amusing instances of this occurred in my own case. Among the men of distinction to whom I had letters of introduc-

tion, was one of the most rising barristers in France. Our conversation naturally enough turned on judges and barristers in England; and from the body generally, we came to talk of individuals.

"Oh, what's the opinion in England of Lord———?" said the French barrister.

"Very unfavourable, indeed."

"It was not always so."

"It was not,—on the contrary he was looked on as the greatest man of his day."

"What can be the reason of this change in public opinion?"

"Oh, simply the change which has taken place in his own conduct. To him, not to the people of this country, the charge of fickleness applies."

"I thought myself that his mode of procedure has been very eccentric of late."

"It has been more than that, it has been grossly inconsistent as well. Indeed, it can

hardly be accounted for on any other supposition than that he is insane."

"You don't mean that," said the other, moving himself back in his seat, and looking unutterably amazed.

"I do indeed."

"What a dreadful thing! I did not know he was here. When did he come?"

"I was not aware, either, that he was here."

"He could not have drowned himself in the river unless he had been here."

"Drowned himself," exclaimed I, now in my turn as much surprised as Mr.——— appeared a few moments before. "Drowned himself! I was not aware of that."

"Oh, didn't you say just now that he had drowned himself?"

"Oh, dear no: I never thought of that."

"Why, didn't you say he had thrown himself into the *Seine?*"

"Oh, no, certainly not; I only said that some people thought him *insane.*"

"Ah, *in-sane*, that is it. *In-sane*, not in the Seine. I mistook what you said. Ah, I see now."

To other characteristics of the French people, I shall have occasion to refer in other parts of my work.

CHAPTER VI.

STATE OF POLITICAL FEELING.

Difficulty at particular times of ascertaining it—Prevalence of Republican principles — Legitimacy — Radicalism — The *Juste Milieu* party.

THE state of politics in France, owing to the changeableness of the people, is always a ticklish topic on which to touch. The fickleness of character to which I have been alluding in the preceding chapter, is exemplified in a more marked manner in reference to political affairs, than to any other matter that could be named. The danger is, that what one writes,

though perfectly just to-day, may seem altogether an incorrect representation of the state of things to-morrow. A few years ago, the French were acknowledged, on all hands, to be Republicans: at present they appear to be vehement admirers of monarchy. This, however, is in appearance only. The public mind of France has, in this respect, undergone no actual change. The French are at this moment as much as ever a nation of Republicans.

I do not make this statement unadvisedly. The conviction I have expressed is the result of the most careful and most impartial inquiry. In order that I might arrive at correct conclusions on the subject, I embraced the opportunities that were afforded me of mingling with politicians of all varieties of opinion, and learning their views of the existing position of political affairs in France. The result of my inquiry was what I have stated. Republicanism is in abeyance, not extinct in France: it is dormant, not dead. The principle exists in undiminished

vitality, but owing to a concurrence of circumstances, it has not of late been fully developed. The *seeming* ebb in the tide of Republican feeling, is solely to be ascribed to the consummate tact of Louis Philippe in dealing with his subjects. The Citizen King is generally allowed to be a clever man; but that is no praise compared with what he is entitled to receive, when his abilities come to be spoken of. My own conviction is that he is one of the ablest monarchs that ever sat on a throne. Modern times have produced no politician that could be compared to him,—with, perhaps, the single exception of Talleyrand. And even from him, Louis Philippe, in many respects, carries off the palm; for while Talleyrand achieved all his diplomatic renown by mere cunning and trickery, the King of the French has gained his trophies by means of his intuitive knowledge of the character of his subjects, and the readiness and effect with which he adapts himself to all their prejudices and partialities.

There lives not a man in France, nor out of it, that would have preserved the tranquillity of the country, or prevented a war in Europe, for six consecutive months, any time during the last ten years. To Louis Philippe alone belongs the glory of having effectually "managed,"—for that is the word—his capricious and restless subjects, during so long a succession of eventful years. Ever since his accession to the throne, he has been his own minister. The various cabinets that have been formed and fallen since 1830, were, though themselves unconscious of it, mere creatures in his hands. He ruled, or more properly speaking, overruled them, with the most perfect ease. And perhaps, the very reason of his complete success in influencing their deliberations and bringing their wills into subjection to his own, is to be found in the fact, that in all his intercourse with his ministers, he exhibits so much urbanity of manner, that he hardly appears to be interfering at all, even when triumphantly carry-

ing everything his own way. The minister, somehow or other, has always fancied that he was carrying out his own notions, while he was all the time, even down to the minutest particular, embodying in the policy of his government the views and wishes of his sovereign. Louis Philippe's motto in the administration of public affairs is, "Mildness and forbearance." He commenced on this principle, and he has never departed from it. He is affable and conciliatory to his ministers, and, through them, to his subjects. He is considerate and indulgent in private life; and the same feelings are visible in every act of his government. When I speak of the leniency of Louis Philippe, let me not be misunderstood. Let it not be supposed that his policy is always, in effect, of a mild or lenient kind. Under all the conciliatory exterior of his measures, there often lies considerable stringency. But measures which are severe in themselves, are often made to appear mild and lenient by reason of the skilful way in

which a covering is thrown over their harsher features. Had many of Louis' measures been presented in their native colours, or seen in their true light, the French would have risen up in rebellion against him and them. Indeed I fear that the charge of gross deception, or positive fraud, may be justly preferred against the Citizen King in reference to particular parts of his policy. It is now, for instance, no longer a matter of doubt that the fortifications around Paris, which, under the pretext of repelling foreign invasion, were some years ago agreed to be built, and are now in the course of construction, were planned for the special purpose of preventing any future revolutions among the people themselves. This is so very evident from the situations chosen for the forts, and the nature of their construction, that the only surprise is, the Parisians did not sooner discover the real object contemplated by these erections. The selection of the sites has been so made, and the forts are constructed in such

a manner, that they could be made to pour their batteries with far greater effect on rebels within the walls of the city, than on foreign invaders without. Were these fortifications once completed, a successful revolution in Paris, though not, perhaps, a matter of impossibility, will be one of very great improbability. It could not, certainly, be accomplished without a most terrible effusion of human blood, and a dreadful destruction of human life. A handful of soldiers in one of these forts would bid defiance to, and spread destruction among, thousands of the populace. This conviction has at length flashed on the minds of the Parisians. Suspicions that the object of the fortifications was to keep down the Parisians themselves, were beginning to be felt when I was in France; but it is only since my return that these suspicions have assumed the form and pressure of a settled conviction. The discovery has been made too late; the fortifications are rapidly

advancing towards completion, and cannot, of course, be now arrested in their progress.

The idea itself was a master-stroke of policy; but still more consummate was the tact displayed by the Citizen King in the mode of carrying his views into effect. The idea suggested itself to him during the Premiership of Casimir Perier, but he said very little about it until he saw a favourable opportunity of getting M. Thiers to propose, and the extreme liberal party to support it, in the Chamber of Deputies. Had its adoption been pressed by the semi-conservative Administration of Perier, the real object might have been suspected, and an opposition got up against it, which would have ended in its defeat. But when proposed by a Minister whose Liberalism was extreme, he calculated on its receiving the approval and support of the whole Republican party. The event has showed how skilfully he played his cards.

Louis Philippe, as already remarked, has a thorough knowledge of his subjects. He knows their

prejudices, which he sedulously strives to secretly foster; and he is intimately acquainted with their partialities, which he always takes care to gratify. His knowledge of the French character was strikingly displayed in the readiness with which he acceded to the wish, when first expressed by his subjects, of disinterring the bones of Napoleon from their resting-place in St. Helena, and bringing them to Paris. In the same knowledge of the character of his subjects, lies the secret of his carrying out the leading improvements in Paris, which were projected by Napoleon. The endless succession of *fêtes* which he has provided for the gratification of his Parisian subjects, have had their origin in the same source.

The result of all this has been, in a great measure, to reconcile the Republicans temporarily to the dynasty of Louis Philippe. The monarch, and not the monarchical principle, is the object of whatever popularity attaches to the present reign. Among the mass of the people

Louis can only be said to be tolerated; he holds no place in their affections. "Devoted attachment to his person and throne,"—which used to be a favourite expression with the excessively loyal in this country, is unknown among the great body of the people of France. The sentiment it expresses, it may with truth be remarked, is one of corresponding rarity.

A Republican feeling everywhere prevails in France, and is cherished with all that fondness with which the French usually regard their principles. The Republican party, too, are in excellent spirits, and full of hope. The advanced age of the king justifies the belief that the day cannot be distant when death will snatch the sceptre from his hand. On that day the hopes of the Republicans are fixed. They look forward exultingly to it, and are secretly preparing to turn to account whatever the "chapter of accidents"—such is their mode of expressing themselves—may then throw up in their favour. The day that witnesses the demise of Louis

Philippe, will be one of the most eventful days in the eventful history of France. No man is more impressed with this conviction than the Citizen King himself. It is well known that the fate of his family, after he is gone, is the subject of intense solicitude to him, and that there is scarcely an hour of his life in which he does not look forward to the day of his dissolution with fear and trembling.

There is a notion in this country that the Republicanism of France is confined to the lower and less intelligent classes in that country. It is supposed, in other words, that the Republicans in France are the counterpart of the Chartists in England. There never was a greater mistake. French Republicanism can boast of including in its ranks many of the master spirits of the age. And in saying this, I do not limit the remark to those who play a prominent part on the stage of political life. It may be extended to a number of the most distinguished names in literature, science, and art.

Arago, the first astronomer of the age, is a most zealous Republican: so is David, the celebrated sculptor, and so are many others whom it is unnecessary to name. Some, indeed, of the most distinguished men in France carry their Republican principles to such an extreme point, as almost to decline personal intercourse with those who do not sympathise in their views. Others, again, are strenuous Republicans in their hearts, but do not make an open profession of their principles, because they do not see any probability of being able immediately to insure their practical recognition. They are quietly biding their time,—watching with attentive eye the progress of events, and holding themselves in readiness to declare their opinions whenever they suppose the proper period has arrived for doing so with effect. This class of persons includes many individuals of high standing in France, and is much more numerous than is generally supposed.

There are others, again, of great celebrity and

influence who are decided Republicans in principle, but are led to put, for a season, their Republicanism in abeyance, because of their personal attachment to one or more members of the dethroned family. The individuals to whom I allude are, in this matter, in precisely the same situation as a Liberal in England, who at an election gives his strenuous support to a Conservative candidate for whom he has a strong personal regard. He sinks, for the moment, the politician in the man. Let his Conservative friend be but removed out of the way, and he will be found to show his Liberalism in the active part he takes against the Tory, and in favour of the Liberal side. Just so is it with several distinguished men in France, who are erroneously supposed to be Legitimists, because from personal friendship they still cling to the fallen family, of whom Henry the Fifth is now the representative. Among these individuals is the celebrated Chateaubriand. His attachment to that unfortunate family, has led to the opi-

nion that he is a Legitimist. He is nothing of the kind. One who is on terms of closest intimacy with him, assured me, when in Paris, that in heart he is a thorough-going Republican. A fact was mentioned to me in corroboration of this—a fact which, I believe, is not generally known in France—namely, that he has not only planted with his own hand various shrubs and flowers round the grave of Armand Carrel, the celebrated Republican editor of "The National," who was killed some years ago in a duel with the present editor of "The Presse,"—but that, when residing in Paris, there is scarcely a week in which he does not visit Carrel's grave, and shed tears over a spot consecrated in his eyes, because it is the resting-place of the late leader of the Republican party,—one of the purest and loftiest-minded men that ever walked the earth.

And here let me say it to the credit of the French, that though as a people they may be, in some measure, chargeable with fickleness in the ordinary attachments and friendships of life,

there is no nation in the world who can more fully appreciate, or hold in more lasting estimation,. those public men whose conduct has been proved to be the result of generous and honourable principle. The profound respect in which the memory of Armand Carrel is still held in all parts of France, affords one of the most striking illustrations of this that could be desired. The English public cannot have forgotten the deep sensation which the intelligence of Carrel's death created in France. It was said by those who do not sufficiently know the character of the French, that this exhibition of feeling was nothing more than a mere momentary flash, vanishing as soon as it was witnessed. The event has shown the injustice which was done to the French by such a supposition. The memory of Armand Carrel is idolized to this hour. If, indeed, that were possible, the affectionate remembrance in which it is held is daily deepening. The very mention of his name is melancholy music in a Frenchman's ear. I am not employ-

ing the language of exaggeration when I say, that I repeatedly observed a sigh unconsciously escape some of those gentlemen whom I met with in Paris, when a reference was made to the death of Armand Carrel. Were there no other proof of the prevalence of Republicanism in France, than is furnished in the universal respect in which his memory is held, that circumstance would be sufficient to show that Republican principles have not ceased to pervade the public mind of that country.

A Frenchman's fidelity to his political principles is far greater than that of an Englishman. An earnest French politician feels so intense an affection for his principles, that they become, in a sense, a part of his moral being. He adheres to them through good report and bad report—through prosperity and adversity. He is neither to be lured out of them by tempting offers, nor frowned out of them by threats of punishment. In the present adherents of the two extreme parties in France—the Legitimist and Repub-

lican parties—we have some most remarkable illustrations of this. Everybody knows that M. Berryer, the distinguished advocate, has clung to the dethroned family, amid circumstances which render him a living martyr to his principles. The same observation applies to M. Ginode, the editor of "The Gazette de France," and hundreds of others in Paris. Republicanism can equally boast of its living martyrs,—of men high in the various learned professions, who have not only perilled their pecuniary interests, but broken up the most intimate and endeared private friendships, rather than compromise their principles. It were invidious to mention individuals, when their name is legion. In France there are at this moment thousands who would not only cheerfully endanger, but, without a moment's hesitation, lay down their lives, if they conceived that their death would in any way promote Republicanism. In England this chivalrous attachment to one's political principles is unknown. It is true that

many Chartists have lately undergone very great sufferings for the Chartist cause; but theirs were accidental, not anticipated sufferings. At the time of making the speeches and performing the acts which drew upon them the displeasure of the Government, they never imagined for an instant that they were exceeding the limits of the law, and rendering themselves liable to punishment. If such an idea had ever crossed their minds, they would neither have made those speeches nor performed those acts. In France, a genuine Republican never wastes a thought as to what will be the consequences to himself personally, of a particular course of conduct, provided he feels that that course of conduct will promote his principles. Hence the remarkable recklessness of personal consequences; hence the utter disregard of death, shown by those who have of late years made attempts on the life of the king.

In intimate connection with this subject, I may mention, that I was in France at the time

of her English Majesty's visit to Eu; and from what came under my own knowledge in Paris, I can bear testimony to the wisdom of the advice given to the Queen not to visit Paris. She would have met with the most enthusiastic reception from the people generally (for I know on what an extensive and splendid scale the preparations were to be made to welcome her to the capital of France); and none would have been more hearty in their acclamations than the better orders of the Republican party. They are as ready as the lower order of Republicans to make any sacrifice—even of life itself—for their principles; but they detest and denounce the idea of promoting the Republican cause by attempting the assassination of kings or queens. They could not, however, have answered for the conduct of the more ignorant and more reckless among their number; and, therefore, it was well for both Louis Philippe and Queen Victoria, that the latter did not pay the visit to the

French capital which, it is understood, was at one time contemplated.

Some years ago there were no fewer than seven different parties in France; and, what is more extraordinary, each of them was represented by one or more members of the Chamber of Deputies, and by at least one of the daily journals. I cannot give a very definite exposition of the peculiar principles of the seven parties. It is unnecessary to mention, that three or four of them consisted of secessions from the larger and more broadly defined parties; just as Lord Stanley, Sir James Graham, and three or four other members of the House of Commons, formed themselves into a small party nicknamed the Dilly, on the break-up of the Grey administration; or as the nine or ten members known by the cognomen of "Young England," have lately constituted themselves into a new party, in the same place. At present there are only four tangible parties in France,—three beside the Republicans. These are the Le-

gitimists, the Radicals, and the *Juste Milieu* party. The Legitimists are the adherents of the dethroned family. They contend that Henry the Fifth is the rightful claimant to the throne of France. This party are much more numerous and formidable than is generally supposed either in this country or in France. In the Chamber of Deputies they are represented by M. Berryer and M. Chautebriand. In the Chamber of Peers, also, they can boast of the support of many distinguished persons. The strength of the Legitimists lies in the south of France. A very considerable proportion of the members returned for that part of the country are adherents of the old dynasty. The reason of this is, that nearly all the families of distinction residing there are Legitimists; and can always, by means of the influence which property never fails to exercise, insure the return of a certain number of members holding their opinions. To such an extent does Legitimacy prevail among the better orders of society in the

South, that the Legitimists in many cases actually advocate universal suffrage; believing that were the franchise possessed by all, they would influence so many of the tenants and labourers on their estates, as would insure the return of Legitimists for every parliamentary department in the South. M. Ginode, editor of "The Gazette de France," was the first to broach this idea. When he began to advocate universal suffrage, he filled France with amazement. His reasons for doing so were not divulged at the time, and no one could form any idea as to the objects he had in view. "The Gazette de France" is the most aristocratic and most Tory paper in the country. It holds the same extreme Tory principles for which our "Morning Post" used to plead so earnestly. Let the English reader, then, only fancy that he awakes some morning, and finds the "Post" most ably, earnestly, and eloquently pleading for that universal suffrage in which the Chartists of England imagine they see a remedy

for all the evils of the country; let the English reader only imagine this, and he will have a parallel case to that of "The Gazette de France," when it suddenly came out as the advocate of extending the franchise to the entire male population of France above twenty years of age.

The extreme Radical party in France are neither numerous nor powerful. They have several representatives of their opinions in the Chamber, but none of them are men of great influence. They have an able and honest daily organ in "The Nation," which is under the editorship of M. Laroche. Steps were taking, when I was in Paris, to bring about a visible union, with a view to a more effective co-operation, between the Legitimists and extreme Radicals, in reference to the single point of universal suffrage; but the result, if the plans were ever matured, has not transpired. At present the suffrage is very limited; it is more so than in this country. The qualification is

the payment to Government of 200 francs a-year in the shape of direct taxation. Formerly the qualification was higher still. Before the revolution of 1830, it was the payment to Government of 300 francs a-year. The members also require a pecuniary qualification for sitting in the Chamber of Deputies: it is not, however, a high one; being only the yearly payment of 500 francs, or 20*l.*, in the shape of direct taxes. Until after the revolution of 1830, the qualification of members was 1000 francs, or double what it now is. But I shall enter more fully into this subject in the eighth chapter.

The *Juste Milieu* party are the party of the King and his ministers: they are looked on in France as the Whigs are in England. There are, doubtless, in both Chambers, many distinguished men among them; but I saw no reason to believe that they were more popular in that country, than the Whigs are in England. The King, and Guizot are the great props of this party; the death of the King will give it a

fatal blow. It is probable that six months after his demise, it will not exist as an independent party, but be only known as matter of history.

CHAPTER VII.

SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT.

Despotic state of things—The Soldiers, the National Guard, and the Police—No public meetings—Means of expressing public opinion—Miscellaneous remarks.

THERE is no use in mincing matters. France, whatever may be said to the contrary, is virtually under a civil and military despotism. There are many persons in this country, who complain that England is not so free as she ought to be. And it is not to be denied that the Executive do not always act up to the spirit of the British constitution. But he who is dis-

satisfied with the measure of freedom enjoyed in England, should pay a temporary visit to France. He will not be there a week—no, nor a day, before the conviction is brought home to him, that, as compared to his own country, France can hardly be said to enjoy any freedom at all. The streets are crowded with soldiers; he cannot open his eyes without encountering scores of persons clothed in military habiliments. If you see a little crowd of persons gazing at the wondrous feats of some itinerant necromancer, you will be surprised at the number of soldiers you find among them. At the theatres, at the public libraries, and, in short, at all the public places, they are sure to cross your path.

Paris, indeed, may be said to be in the hands of the military. It looks like a great garrison. What between the ordinary troops and the National Guards, there are seldom less than 100,000 armed men in Paris, being a tenth part of the entire population of the place.

Of course the National Guards are never all on duty at a time, but still the very knowledge that they are liable to be called out on any emergency, is sufficient to make the Parisian feel that he is always living under a military despotism. The number of the National Guards varies from 60,000 to 65,000, and the regular troops, from 30,000 to 35,000. The Municipal Guards, or police force, are under 1500. The bare fact of so many military men being stationed in one place, is incompatible with all our English notions of freedom. The very idea would render us miserable: we could not live under such a system. In Paris the military are everything, and are employed in ways of which we have no conception in this country. When, for instance, any quarrel takes place in a house, or disturbance occurs in the streets, the police, instead of themselves interposing to prevent any unpleasant consequences, call in one or more soldiers. Why, the very appearance of a

soldier, even though purely accidental, in any disturbance or quarrel in England, would call down the deep indignation of the whole country, and be made the subject of Parliamentary denunciation and inquiry. The Parisians, however, seem to take a different view of the matter, and as they make no murmurs or complaints, we have no right to dictate to them what notions they ought to entertain, or what course they ought to adopt, on the subject.

But odious as Englishmen would feel to be the presence of so many soldiers in any of our towns, and their right to interfere when any ordinary breach of the peace takes place, we would deem it still more intolerable to be subjected, as the French are, to a system of the worst *espionage*. The spy system prevails to a frightful extent in Paris. You cannot enter a public place in which there are half a dozen persons, and express your views of public affairs, should your remarks be hostile to the King or his Government, without running the

risk of being arrested on information secretly given to the Prefect of the police by one of the six. Neither are you safe in private society. You cannot even meet a few individuals at the house of an intimate friend, and be sure that you can there express with safety your views on the existing order of things. One of their number may be in the secret pay of Government,—may, in other words, be a spy. And what very much aggravates this state of things, if, indeed, it be not, in a great measure, its parent, is the fact, that you may be arrested, without your even knowing the name of your accuser. Nor perhaps, will you be told until after you have been some time imprisoned, what is the nature of the charge preferred against you. It is optional with the officer of Government employed to prosecute, to apprise you of, or to withhold from you a knowledge, of the specific offence for which you have been arrested. The same party may keep you for months in prison with-

out bringing your case on for trial, on the plea or under the pretext, that he has not yet completed the collection of evidence against you. Instances of persons being kept in prison for six and twelve months, without ever knowing or suspecting for what offence, are of frequent occurrence. The prisoner has no means, as in this country, of forcing the officers of Government to bring on his trial. Was there ever despotism like this? Who would have believed that it could have existed in the nineteenth century in a country so great and enlightened as France? A worse state of things could hardly have prevailed even within the walls of the Bastile, when that institution was in all its glory, and the spirit of persecution was in its utmost vigour.

In France no public meetings on matters directly or indirectly connected with politics, are allowed to take place. Not more than twenty-one persons must, under any pretext, assemble together without previously obtaining

the special permission of Government; which permission is never granted when the proceedings are likely to partake of a political complexion. Hence the French are wholly without what we regard as one of the greatest of our privileges,—the privilege of grumbling with, and roundly abusing, our rulers.

It will be asked, in what way then, is an expression of public opinion given on any of the engrossing questions of the day? It is only through the medium of the public journals; and hence the secret, in a great measure, of the extraordinary influence which the more ably conducted of the Parisian papers exercise on the minds of the community. It is unnecessary to state, after what I have said, that public speaking is an art which is not so much cultivated in France as in this country. The regular demagogue, so well known in England, may be said to be wholly unknown among our neighbours. The only opportunities afforded the Parisians of making public speeches, are on

the occasion of the election of members for a new Parliament, and the election of officers of the National Guards. A general election of the chamber of Deputies takes place every five years. The French are then allowed to meet with each other in any numbers they please, and to make any harangues they choose, provided they do not talk treason or sedition. The election of officers to serve in the National Guards takes place triennally. These elections often lead to great excitement, and to a good deal of animated speechifying. All persons have a vote in choosing these officers, who are themselves liable to serve in the National Guards, which all are who keep any kind of establishment or occupy furnished lodgings. The people of Paris, however, have not the right to elect any officer above the rank of Captain. The appointment of the highest grade of officers rests with the crown,—so that while apparently confiding to the people the right of selecting the officers of the National

Guards, and thus subjecting that body, in appearance, to popular control, the National Guards are, except when influenced by some unusual demonstration of public feeling, quite at the beck of Government; for it will almost invariably be found, that each of the Generals whom the Crown places at the head of that body, act in such a manner as he knows will be most likely to meet the wishes of those to whom he is indebted for the appointment. All the officers chosen by the people are placed under the Generals appointed by Government, and can therefore hardly be said to have any will or power of their own.

There are two modes in which the army is recruited. The one is by voluntary enlistment, as with us; the other is by conscription. The latter affords a remarkable illustration of the despotism which prevails in France. A balloting for recruits from among all those liable to serve in the army (which all are above the age of twenty, who are untainted by crime) takes

place every year. In the month of January the Mayors of the various arrondissements or departments into which France is divided, meet at the different towns of their respective departments, accompanied by all the young men in those departments who are liable to serve. Their names are inscribed on a list, and the young men then proceed to draw lots. Those who draw numbers below the contingent of men required, are those who will have to serve. Supposing, for example, that in a particular department, the complement of men which that department is required to furnish, be 200, and that the number liable to serve is 2,000, all who draw numbers within the 200 are those on whom the ballot falls, while those above that number escape. Should any of those on whom the lot falls decline serving themselves, they must find acceptable substitutes. The terms on which substitutes are to be had, vary from £50 to £70.—This, then, is a serious interference with the liberty of the subject. It imposes the

necessity on all those persons who are liable to serve, of providing substitutes before they can leave France for a foreign land. Any man who is drawn and who is not forthcoming within a limited period after the ballotting day, is not only liable to imprisonment, if in France, but forfeits all his privileges as a citizen of that country. Hence many young men, clerks and others, whose means will not admit of their procuring a substitute, are often obliged to reject tempting offers to go abroad. In the event of their being balloted for and not appearing at the proper time and place, they are proclaimed outlaws, and consequently must consider themselves for ever exiled from their native country. What would be thought of such a state of things in England in a time of profound peace? Would England submit to such despotism as this? There can be but one answer to the question.

But the French themselves are not the only persons who are made to feel that they live

under a despotic government. The English and all foreigners, are also experimentally taught that, with all its boasted liberty, there is much of galling bondage in France. The very moment an Englishman puts foot on the shores of France, he finds himself surrounded by a *posse* of *douaniers*, who admonish him, in a way not to be misunderstood, that the first thing he must do is to produce his passport at the office appointed for the purpose. There he leaves it over-night, calls next morning, and gets a fresh passport, for which he pays his two francs. He goes to his hotel, and the landlord asks him his name, which he enters in his book, at the same time stating, as an apology, that he is obliged by Government to give an account of all persons who put up in his house. The Englishman proceeds to Paris, and, before being allowed to pass the barriers of the city, he must produce his passport. He stops where the diligence stops, and there again he is asked to show his passport. He must also mention the place at

which he means to reside. He reaches the hotel where he intends staying, and there again the landlord requests to see his passport. On the following morning, and every morning he remains, he sees the police coming to the hotel to make inquiries respecting those who are putting up there. Formerly, the unpleasant idea suggested itself to his mind, that he surely must be considered a suspicious character, when he could not move a step without being intercepted by the police: now, he can hardly help asking himself the question, whether, when thus so pertinaciously dogged by the police, he may not really, after all, be a rogue,—though he never before suspected it. The French authorities deal with all foreigners as if they were a set of rogues. People of other countries may think nothing of this, but the Englishman views it differently. It is to him unspeakably galling: he feels himself insulted on every fresh occasion on which he is thus obliged to come in contact with the civil authorities. He can see no earthly

reason why he, who wishes to proceed peaceably on his way, should thus be molested at every step he takes. He inwardly wishes the French authorities at an anonymous place, and blesses his stars that it was his good fortune to be born in England.

The *surveillance* of the French police is carried to an extent which, were it not so annoying, would be amusing from its very ludicrousness. The police are stationed in all directions round the city, to see that no person bring anything into Paris which has not paid the duty excisable on all articles that pass the barriers. To show the absurd rigour with which this regulation is carried out, I may mention, that the hackney coach which two friends and myself had hired for the occasion, was stopped and examined, as we came out of Pere la Chaise, the great cemetery or burying ground of Paris. The fear was, lest we had any articles with us which had not paid the duty. What we could have brought from a place wholly conseerated to the reception

of the dead, even had we been the most confirmed smugglers in France, I am wholly at a loss to imagine. The sum of the matter is this; that France, though nominally a free country, is not so in reality. In all that constitutes true freedom, England is incomparably before it.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS.

The CHAMBER OF PEERS—Origin and history—Qualifications of Peers—General remarks—CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES—Origin and history—Description of the exterior—Description of the interior—Mode of procedure during the sittings—Miscellaneous observations.

IN a work devoted to "PARIS AND ITS PEOPLE," it would be an unpardonable omission to pass over the two legislative Chambers,—the Chamber of Peers and the Chamber of Deputies. The former is in France what our House of Lords is in England, and the latter corresponds in most respects to our House of Commons.

The Chamber of Peers excites far less attention, and is deemed of much less importance in France, than the House of Lords is in England. The place in which the Peers of France meet is the Luxembourg Palace; about, I should think, a mile distant from the place in which the Deputies assemble. The Chamber of Peers was erected in 1612, by Catherine de Medici, celebrated in European as well as in French history. She gave it to her son, the Duke of Orleans; and it was called the Palais d'Orleans until the Revolution of 1792. In the early part of that Revolution, it was converted to the purposes of a prison. On the accession of Bonaparte to the supreme power in the State, it was made the place in which the Consuls held their discussions and deliberations. In 1814, it was made the Chamber of Peers, and has since that time continued to be the place in which that body have held their sittings. The place, like our own present House of Lords, is small, and has nothing of majesty or splendour in it. The

President sits in a desk, a little elevated above the floor, and the Peers sit on chairs, arranged in an amphitheatrical form, in the area in his front. In rising to address the assembly, the Peer proceeds to a spot immediately under the desk of the President; and having concluded his speech, resumes the occupation of his vacant chair.

The Chamber of Peers is invariably summoned by the Sovereign to meet at the same time as the Chamber of Deputies,—bearing, in this respect, a resemblance to our House of Lords and House of Commons. And, as both branches of the French legislature commence, so they close their sittings at the same time. There is this difference between the French Chamber of Peers and our English House of Lords, that the former has no jurisdiction in matters of common law or equity. It is purely a political tribunal. It sits, it is true, on particular occasions, in the capacity of a court of justice,—but only to try persons

accused of high treason, or of crimes against the security and the peace of the State. To judge of matters of this nature, it can be convoked by a special summons from the king, when the Chamber of Deputies is not sitting. Marshal Ney, Louvel, the assassin of the Duke de Berry, and several of the attempted assassins of the present monarch were tried by the Peers.

Previous to the Revolution of 1830, the proceedings of the Chamber of Peers were secret. Not only were no persons connected with newspaper establishments allowed to be present during its sittings, but even the private friends of members were excluded. The public were, therefore, kept in total ignorance of what took place in that assemblage. Important decisions or results transpired, as a matter of course; but the movers, seconders, supporters, or opposers of particular measures, were unknown, except in those cases in which some person connected with the press, who was on terms of intimacy with one or more of the Peers, succeeded in

eliciting from them the desired information. By the Charter of 1830, however, the sittings of the Peers were declared to be open to the public; and since that time the Chamber has been accessible to any one who wished to be present, provided he had obtained a Peer's order.

There is a regulation relative to the right of a Peer to enter the Chamber, which will sound strange to an English ear. I allude to the circumstance of every Peer receiving a special letter from the Sovereign, recognising his right to enter the Chamber, immediately before the commencement of every session. I am not aware that the Usher of the Chamber ever so far doubts the honour of a Peer as to require the production of this letter, but it is competent for him to do so; and in the event of the Peer not being able to produce it, to refuse him admission.

Before the Revolution of 1830, the Peerage of France was hereditary. In other words, the

right of membership in the upper Chamber descended, as with our nobility, from father to son. The charter of that year abolished the hereditary Peerage. It is now elective,—the right of appointment being vested in the Crown.

Peers are eligible to take their seats in the Chamber when they are five-and-twenty, but they are not allowed to exercise any of the legislative functions until they have reached their thirtieth year. It is difficult to see the utility of this regulation. The mind is usually as matured at twenty-five as at thirty.

The Princes Royal in France, as in this country, are Peers in virtue of their birth; but they cannot vote until they are twenty-five years of age. Even then they have no right to vote, nor, indeed, to enter the Chamber at all, without a special order from the Sovereign, communicated to the Chamber on the opening of each session. The presence of any Prince of the Blood, without the observance of this formality,

would vitiate the whole of the proceedings of that branch of the legislature.

The number of Peers in France, considering the relative population of the two countries, is more than a third less than in England. Though the population of France be 34,000,000, and that of the United Kingdom barely 24,000,000, we have 442 Peers, and France only 306. And even small as this number is, it has, within the last quarter of a century, received an addition of about one-third. In the year 1827, there was a creation of Peers more extensive, perhaps, than was ever before known in France or any other country. The number was increased, by one stroke of Charles the Tenth's pen, from 214 to 290. The new Peers were all divested of their rank, titles, and legislative functions, by the Chamber of Deputies, on the accession of Louis Philippe; but their places were supplied by other creations.

Many, perhaps a majority, of the Peers of France, receive pensions from the Crown. Those

who formed part of the Imperial Senate, and were allowed to retain their privileges, after the Revolution of 1830, are each allowed 24,000 francs a-year, being a little less than £1000. A number of those of more recent creation receive pensions varying from 12,000 to 15,000 francs per annum. Those who have the incomes required by law to support the dignity of the Peerage, do not receive any gratuities, in the shape of pensions, from the Government. The possessor of a dukedom must have an annual income of 25,000 francs (about £600 a-year); a Marquis, Count, Viscount, or Baron, must be in the receipt of 10,000 francs, or about £400, in order to be eligible to a seat in the Chamber of Peers.

From the Chamber of Peers I now proceed to the Chamber of Deputies, which, though hardly deserving the epithet of magnificent, as compared with some of the other public buildings in Paris, is a remarkably fine edifice. Nothing could exceed the felicity of its situation.

It commands a view of the Tuileries and the Champs Elysées, and faces, about half a mile distant, the magnificent Madeleine Church. The space in front is open, and singularly beautiful, for a considerable distance. The building was erected in the year 1723, by the Duchess Dowager of Bourbon. Sixty years afterwards, it came into the possession of the Prince de Condé, by whom it was very greatly enlarged. Hitherto it had been known under the name of the Palais Bourbon; but, having been seized and plundered by the revolutionary party, it was fixed on as the place of their sittings by the Council of Five Hundred. From first to last, the sum expended on this building cannot have been much short of £1,250,000. The portico in the northern front is very imposing; it measures about one hundred feet in length, and consists of twelve Corinthian columns, which are approached by a flight of steps, twenty in number. At the foot of these steps, standing on elevated pedestals, are gigantic statues, personifying

Justice and Mercy; while in the foreground are figures of Sully and Colbert, and two others (l'Hospital and d'Agnessa) less known to the general reader of French history. The royal entrance is at the back, or south side, but has nothing particularly imposing about it. The entrance to the public is by a side door in the west wing of the portico, into a hall of waiting; thence the visitor passes on into a large lobby, and afterwards through a hall, in which the Deputies receive the printed reports of committees, into the Chamber itself. On entering the Chamber, you are struck with the beauty and the arrangement of the place. It is of a semi-circular form, and contains ample accommodation for its 459 Members. It is lighted from the top. There are two ranges of galleries, so divided as to bear, in some respects, a resemblance to the private boxes in our English theatres. The galleries are behind a range of marble pillars, twenty in number, which contribute much to the pleasing aspect which the

place presents. The benches on which the members sit are differently constructed from ours. There are altogether ten ranges of boxes, from the floor to the one farthest back. The first three rows, extending all round, contain accommodation for four members; and the remaining seven, for five. Passages about two feet in breadth extend from the floor to the back benches, making the length of the benches eight or nine feet. The greatest facility is consequently afforded for members passing to and from their seats. The benches gradually rise above each other as in most of the dissenting chapels in this country; and therefore the occupants of those seats which are farthest removed from the President, sit as comfortably as those who are nearest to him. The semi-circular form of the place, and the skilful arrangement of the various benches, prevent any of the members being situated at an inconvenient distance from the speaker. The most remote member in the Chamber, cannot be farther off

from the gentleman speaking in the tribune, than ten or twelve yards. The complaint of being inaudible, so often made in our House of Commons by the members themselves, but more frequently, and with too much reason, by the reporters, can have no existence here. The lowest toned speaker is easily heard in all parts of the Chamber; and as distinctly, I should suppose, in the galleries devoted to the public and the press, as in the body of the house. I had the curiosity to get a person to speak in an ordinary tone of voice, from the immediate vicinity of the tribune, in order to ascertain how far the construction of the Chamber was favourable to public speaking; and the result was, that though I was in the remotest corner of the house, I heard every word as distinctly as if I had been within a yard or two of the speaker.

The floor of the Chamber is of varied marble, and so is the tribune whence the members address the House. The tribune is a sort of box, formed of marble, about two feet in width and

five in length. The depth, as nearly as I could judge by the eye, is about three feet. The tribune, which is immediately in front of the Presidential chair, is ascended, either from the right or left, by a flight of six steps. The tribune is railed off on either side. Its height above the floor is three or four feet. The chair of the President is a few feet higher than the tribune; so that the head of the President sitting, and the head of the member standing, are, as nearly as may be, on a level. The Presidential chair is placed on a small platform, six or seven feet above the ground, and is four or five feet from the wall. There is nothing remarkable about the chair. It is only of the size of a common chair,—such as may be seen in any respectable private house. It has a cushioned back and two sides, in order that its occupant may not have to complain of want of comfort while in it. It has not much of fineness or fancy about it. It contrasts most strikingly with the immense chair—more like a

little house—in which the speaker of our House of Commons spends his sessional existence. When a member ascends the tribune to address the Chambers his back is turned to the President; but there is so much of the mercurial in the manner of most of the speakers, that he catches repeated glimpses of the profile of the orator. On either side and directly in front of the President, is a clock, making three clocks in all. The Chamber is consequently well supplied with the means of ascertaining the time. The senators are constantly reminded that time is on the wing, and that therefore they ought to make a right improvement of it. There are six clerks to the Chambers, three sitting on either side of the Presidential chair. Instead of clerks as with us, they are called secretaries. Immediately above the President's head is a splendid picture of Louis Philippe swearing before the Chamber to uphold, and act in accordance with, the Charter of 1830. This seems to be a favourite picture with the French, for I saw the same

picture, or rather a copy of it, in all the leading public places in Paris.

The seats in the Chamber of Deputies are incomparably superior to those in the House of Commons. In the latter place they have only open backs, which are not above eighteen or twenty inches in height. They resemble altogether—only that they are cushioned—the seats appropriated to the poor in our churches and chapels. The benches in the French Chamber, on the contrary, have high close backs, lined with green cloth, while in front they are about ten or twelve inches in width. Every member has his own seat, his name and the number of the seat being affixed to it. He has also a small writing case, with all necessary writing materials, constantly before him. The case is indeed fixed to the bench, and therefore there is no risk of its being upset and the ink spilled. This must be a great accommodation to the members, as they can not only write their letters without rising from their seats, but those of

them connected with the public journals—of whom there are several—can there indite their leading articles during the tedium of a dull debate. Authors who are members, can also, in like manner, by means of the accommodation thus provided for them, prosecute their literary labours while nominally engaged in the performance of their legislative duties.

The ministerial benches are in the immediate vicinity of the tribune. They are the first of the nine rows into which the Chamber is divided. The names of the several ministers are not affixed to their seats as in the case of the other members; but simply the particular offices which they respectively fill—such as the Minister of the Interior, the Minister of Public Instruction, &c. Consequently, when a change of Ministry occurs, no alteration is needed in the words affixed to the ministerial benches.

Immediately beneath the tribune, sit the reporters for the "The Moniteur," which is the accredited official journal. Ten chairs are set

apart for them, that number being often present to take their respective turns when matters of importance are to come on for discussion,—in which case they are expected to report the Ministerial speeches as nearly as may be verbatim. The reporters—varying from thirty to forty—for the various other morning journals, have a place appropriated to themselves in a gallery opposite the President. The benches on their right and left, with the exception of the one on the left of the President, are set apart for the public, who are admitted by an order from an officer called the "Questor of the Chamber." The bench on the left of the President is appropriated to Foreign Ambassadors and other persons holding high official situations.

I was a good deal surprised to see so many proofs of the trifling occupations with which the members amuse themselves, when met for deliberative and legislative purposes. Many of the seats were covered with hieroglyphical characters, and ridiculous figures of various kinds,

which showed that the pen could move when the tongue did not. Nor are the labours of honourable gentlemen confined on such occasions to the pen. Judging from the specimens I saw, there must be some excellent carvers among them. The benches bear ample proof that penknives, any more than pens, are not idle when the Chambers are sitting. School-boy recollections rushed into my mind, when I saw the written and carved hieroglyphics, which were the workmanship of the French legislators. My thoughts reverted, with a rapidity surpassing that with which light travels, to the period—full thirty years ago—when I used so see many of my companions soundly thrashed by our teacher, for doing precisely similar work. And if the truth must be told, the aspect of particular benches reminded me of the severe punishment I had often received for the very offence which so many of the French representatives were here proved to be guilty of. Nor, as French pedagogues are, I presume, the same as

pedagogues all the world over, could I help wondering that the remembrance of school-boy discipline, did not deter the artists in this instance from disfiguring the benches. It will hardly be credited, but such is the fact, that not even the Ministerial benches, or "bancs," as they are called, can boast an absence of traces of the pen, or the operations of the pen-knife. Still more incredible must appear the fact, that even the part of the bench honoured with the occupancy of the philosophical Guizot, is defaced by a variety of unintelligible figures and incisions of the knife. Let me not, however, be understood as wishing to insinuate, that these owe their existence to the first Minister of France. They may be the workmanship of some less distinguished man—of some of his colleagues, perhaps, in his absence; or of some other member of the Chamber who never was, nor ever will be a Minister, and whose capacity is limited to the display of such school-boy accomplishments.

I have already referred to the regret which I felt at the circumstance of the legislative session being over before my arrival in Paris. But though I had not, in consequence, an opportunity of seeing the persons and listening to the living voices of the members, I did not fail to picture to myself what the animation and interest of the scene, must be when all the vacant benches before me were occupied by the master spirits of modern France, and when some question of engrossing interest was under consideration. Having seen M. Guizot at public meetings in London, I could fancy I saw him rise from his seat in the front bench, a little to the left of the President, and ascending the tribune with all the quiet dignity of manner for which he is remarkable, pour forth a torrent of withering sarcasm on some preceding speaker who had been assailing the Government of which he is the head.

The French Chambers usually assemble in November, and prorogue in May or June. The

Chamber of Deputies commence their sittings at an early hour in the day,—sometimes so early as one in the afternoon, and never later than two. The day's sedurent rarely lasts more than from four to five hours. The house generally adjourns about six o'clock,—so that the legislative duties of the members seldom interfere with their dinner. When any important speaker has addressed the Chamber on an important question, the member who means to reply to him, usually moves the adjournment of the debate till the following day. It is a curious fact, that out of the entire 459 constituting the Chamber, there are not more than four or five who have sufficient confidence in their extemporaneous resources, to undertake the reply to an opponent, on his sitting down after delivering a speech on an important question. Guizot is unrivalled for the readiness and effect with which he replies to an opponent. No one knows this better than himself, and hence the fact that he never allows a formidable op-

ponent to have the last word, and thereby give him and his cause the benefit of having it all his own way in next morning's newspapers. Many persons, indeed, think Guizot more felicitous in his replies on the spur of the moment, than in his most laboured speeches. Thiers is also happy at reply, except when he allows himself to be excited, which he very often does to his own great disadvantage and to the injury of the cause which he espouses.

Adjoining the Chamber, and only separated by a passage a few feet in width, is a very spacious room which answers the double purpose of a committee and waiting room.

I ought here to mention that the proceedings in the French Chambers relative to all private bills are very different from ours. The Chamber is divided into nine sections, each of the sections being represented by a member chosen by itself, whose special duty it is to watch the progress of the bill. When it is one of comparatively little importance, there is seldom any difference of

opinion as to who should be elected; but when the bill excites universal interest, two or three, and sometimes even four candidates, are nominated. The point is settled by an appeal to a division, which is accordingly taken.

The proceedings of the Chamber are, in other respects, also different from those which take place in our House of Commons. A member is not allowed as with us, to bring forward any motion he pleases for the purpose of passing a new law, by giving several days' previous notice. Formerly the only mode open to private members of bringing forward a motion for the enactment of a new law, was for the member to move an address to the King, praying that he would be pleased to order his motion to be presented to the Chamber for its adoption. If the Chamber happened to be unfavourable to the contemplated legislation, it opposed the carrying of the address to his Majesty, and its defeat ended the matter. By the Charter of 1830, however, a member who wishes to submit some new pro-

position, has only to place a copy of it, signed with his own name, on the table of the President. In the case of Ministers of the Crown again, when they propose a new law in the name and on the part of the Sovereign, they must, after reading it, refer it to the special committees (which, I should mention, are called *bureaux*), into which, as before remarked, the Chamber is divided. If three or more of these nine committees report in favour of the introduction of the contemplated measure, it is forthwith brought before the Chamber, and a discussion of its principle follows. This discussion corresponds to the debate which takes place in the House of Commons on the second reading of all important bills. The principle of the measure being once approved, the Chamber proceeds to the consideration of its various clauses, one by one, as is done with us after a bill has been committed. The votes on the clauses of a measure are taken openly,—those members who are in favour of the affirmative view

of the question, rising up in their seats, and those who are opposed to the clause remaining in a sitting posture. A member, however, has the right, though it is rarely exercised, to demand that the vote be taken in secret. When the right is insisted on, there must be some very strong and particular reason for it. When a division takes place on the principle, or, as the French themselves say, the *ensemble* of a measure, it is always by ballot. An urn is placed on the tribune, in which all who are in favour of the motion deposit a white ball, and those who are for its rejection place a black one. The balls are then taken out and counted. If there be a majority of white balls the measure is agreed to: if a majority of black ones it is lost. The way in which individual members vote on any question, is thus, consequently, unknown either to their constituents or to their fellow-members.

It was formerly the practice in the Chamber of Deputies for the members always to *read*

their speeches. There was, indeed, a rule of the House making it binding on members to observe that form. This regulation has long ceased to exist, but the practice of reading speeches still prevails to a very great extent. To an Englishman, there is something exceedingly heavy and uninteresting in this; though the French, who are accustomed to it, seem to think no more of the practice, than congregations in the Established Churches of England do when the clergyman reads his sermon. A member of the Chamber of Deputies mounts the tribune precisely in the same way as a clergyman ascends the pulpit, and deliberately drawing out the manuscript of his speech from his pocket, commences reading it to the assembly. Of course these written addresses want the fire and animation in the matter, and the energy of manner in their delivery, which characterise those speeches that are spoken, not read, and are usually, in a great measure, delivered on the spur of the moment. Scenes are also, for the

same reason, less frequent in the Chamber of Deputies than in the House of Commons. When they do occur, they are generally of a very exciting kind, because they result, almost invariably, from the angry collision of two or more of the leading members. A scene got up between the sixth and seventh-rate men, who usually figure in the scenes which take place in St. Stephen's, would not be tolerated in the French Chamber. They must either have first-rate performers in their scenes, or none at all. The Borthwicks and Ferrands of the French Chamber, if they must have what is vulgarly called a "row" with one or more of their personal or political opponents, must choose some out-of-doors locality for the exhibition. They would not be endured in the Chamber; nor, if they were, would the public journals report a word of the altercation between them.

In the House of Commons, as most persons are aware, the presence of forty members when the Speaker takes the chair, at four o'clock,

suffices to make, as the technical phrase is, a House. It is very different in France. Half the members of the Chamber of Deputies must be present when the President takes his seat, otherwise business cannot be commenced. The practice of counting out is unknown in the Chamber: nor are inconvenient motions got rid of by not making a house when they are to be brought forward, or by any of the other little expedients, worthy only of little minds, which are so often resorted to in the English House of Commons.

The publication of the proceedings in the Chamber of Deputies is, as in the case of the reports of the proceedings in the British Parliament, entirely a matter of sufferance, not of right. On the simple demand of five members, all strangers may be ordered to withdraw,—just as with us, a simple glance of any honourable gentleman to the gallery, accompanied by the remark, "I think I see strangers in the gallery," suffices to insure its immediate clearance.

The power which the French Chamber possesses in this matter, is not, however, any more than in our House of Commons, ever put in force, unless in some extraordinary case, occurring, perhaps, once in a quarter of a century.

And here I may remark, that the interest, great as it is, which Englishmen take in the proceedings of Parliament, is not nearly so great as that which is evinced in France, when any important debate is expected. The gallery in the Chamber, which is capable of accommodating somewhere about 750 persons, is often crowded. The gallery in the House of Commons, to be sure, cannot with any comfort accommodate a fifth part of the number; but if it could, it would rarely be half full. Even the limited space allotted to strangers is frequently far from being fully occupied, when questions of vital importance to the country are under consideration.

Alterations have taken place within the last

thirty years in the Chamber of Deputies, which, when mentioned, cannot fail to surprise all who, like ourselves, are unaccustomed to changes. Radical changes do not occur with us more than once in a century, or a century and a half. In France, they have been looked for, ever since the Revolution of 1792, as matters of course. Though now numbering 459 members, the Chamber consisted, in 1816, of only 258, being not much more than a third of the number of members of which our House of Commons consists. The practice, at the period referred to, was to elect the members for five years, which is the time for which they are elected now,—but a fifth of the number was renewed every year. The Chamber was divided into five departments, and on the meeting of each new Parliament, lots were cast, as to which of the five departments should be renewed the first year. The other four departments were then renewed, according to a numerical arrangement, as each successive year rolled away. The changes which thus took

place in the Chamber of Deputies very much resembled those which take place in the directorship of all the leading public societies and bodies,—that is to say, a certain number went out by rotation, but were eligible to re-election. At the period of which I am speaking, France was divided into eighty-six departments, some of which were subdivided into electoral colleges. Several of the departments—the most important ones, of course—contained five or six electoral colleges. The department of the Seine, including Paris, contained eight electoral colleges. None of the departments returned less than two members to the Chamber; while some of them returned six, seven, eight, ten, and in two instances—those of the Seine and Nord—no fewer than twelve members. This state of things was altered in 1821, the year in which Bonaparte died. In that year, the extraordinary number of 172 new Deputies was added to the Chamber, raising the entire number from 258 to 430. Still the number of departments and electoral

colleges remained the same. To each department and college was assigned one or more new members, according to the estimated importance of the particular locality. In 1824, another important change in the constitution of the Chamber took place, namely, extending the period for which the legislature should sit, from five to seven years. That enactment of Louis the Eighteenth has been repealed, and a recurrence made to the former period of five years. The number of Deputies, too, has been increased to 459. The electoral colleges have also been increased to that number; so that for every member there is now an electoral college, instead of as formerly one college returning two, three, four, five, or even eight members.

The Revolution of 1830 led, as it might be expected it would, to other important changes in the Chamber. Until then, no person was eligible to a seat in it who had not attained his fortieth year; now any one is admissible who has reached his thirtieth year. Why the having

attained even this age, should be held indispensable to a seat in the lower branch of the legislature, is not easy to perceive. With us any one is eligible who has reached twenty-one, —the period of his majority. The best days of many men are those which intervene between the age of twenty-one and thirty. Some of the most splendid oratorical displays ever made in the English House of Commons, have been made before the speakers had attained the age of thirty. In various other instances, too, some of the greatest statesmen whom this or any other country ever produced, displayed the most consummate statesmanship, as well as senatorial talents generally, before they had reached their thirtieth year. Among the departed senators who had raised themselves to the highest renown, in the space intervening between their attaining their majority and their reaching their thirtieth year, may be mentioned the names of Lord Chatham, Charles Fox, William Pitt, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and George Can-

ning. Among living examples of persons attaining the highest legislative distinction before their thirtieth year, are to be found the names of Lord Brougham, Sir Robert Peel, and Lord Stanley. By this absurd regulation, the door of the Chamber of Deputies is shut, for a series of years, against some of the most talented men in France. It is surprising that such a law should be suffered to remain on the statute book.

The long speeches which constitute the great vice of English legislation, are comparatively unknown in the French Chambers. It is only when either of the leading ministers has to enter into the details of any great measure he means to submit to the branch of the legislature to which he belongs, that he occupies the attention of the members for any length of time. A reply of an hour or an hour and a-half's duration, to the speech of some member who has previously spoken, would be considered, though an every day's affair with us, quite an event in the

oratorical annals of either Chamber. No one speaks for speaking's sake; no one rises because he has a speech to make, but because he has something to say. There are no speaking machines like Lord Brougham in the Chamber of Peers; men who are laid under a sort of constitutional necessity to deliver, nightly, two or three newspaper columns of matter—no Joseph Humes in the Chamber of Deputies, to speak thirty times in one night, and twenty times, when the House is in Committee, on the same question. If so, they would not be able to get through the business of each day in the short space of from four to five hours. The practice so prevalent of writing their speeches, has, no doubt, had the effect of making the members proficients in the art of brevity. Does any body suppose, that if Lord Brougham and Mr. Hume had to write their speeches, the former would be so long at a time, and the latter so often, on his legs? What also contributes its quota to the brevity which characterises the oratorical

exhibitions in the French Chambers, is the wise determination come to by the "gentlemen of the press," of only reporting the leading men; and, even in their case, of only giving the points in their speeches. The reporters, by this means, not only teach the members the desirableness of brevity; but they teach them, by the abridged reports they give of their speeches, without omitting anything essential, how brevity may be best attained. When Napoleon was at the head of affairs in France, he carried his aversion to speechifying so far as to prohibit it altogether. The members were allowed to vote, but not to make speeches,—a regulation which the Quakers observe at all their meetings connected with the business of the Society. And yet, though Napoleon prohibited the members of the Chambers from speaking, he paid them for their legislative services, just as the advocates of the Charter in this country propose, *when* the Charter has become the law of the land, to pay all the

Members of the House of Commons. The sum of 3,000,000 francs, or £120,000, was yearly voted to the Deputies out of the civil list.

There is one regulation in the transaction of public business in the French legislature, which I think worthy of adoption by the British Parliament. I refer to the practice of taking up bills, on the re-assembling of a new session, at precisely the same stage as that in which they had been left at the prorogation of the previous session. With us all bills are necessarily dropped, or lost, which are not passed by the end of the session, however near they may be their final stage; and, if re-introduced in the following session, the same forms must all be again gone through. Now, surely, this is absurd. Why not take up the measure next session at the stage it had reached when Parliament was prorogued? This arrangement would prevent much of that rash and crude legislation which is the result of a desire to hurry a measure through the House, consequent

on its being lost altogether if not passed before the session ends.

There is another arrangement in connection with the Chamber of Deputies which might be adopted with great advantage by this country. I refer to the circumstance of an individual who is not a member of either branch of the legislature, not only being eligible to a seat in the Cabinet when chosen to fill any important Government office, but being allowed a seat in the Chamber in virtue of his office,—only that he has not the privilege of voting. The ineligibility—I mean conventionally—of individuals in this country to a seat in the Cabinet, who are not members of either branch of the legislature, often deprives the public of the service of men of the highest order of business talents. Counsel are heard at the bar of either House of Parliament, in opposition to any measure of importance. Why then, it may be asked, should there not be a law conferring the right of sitting in the House of Commons, on those who may be made Cabinet Ministers

without possessing a seat either in the House of Lords or Commons? The barrister employed as counsel has no vote, though he may speak for hours in opposition to a particular measure; and why might not members of the Government be allowed to speak, in like manner, but without voting, on any of the questions which specially belong to their department of the public service?

I have already made a passing allusion to the President of the Chamber of Deputies. He is elected annually,—not at the meeting of every new Parliament only, as in the case of our Speaker. Previous to the adoption of the Charter of 1830, the President was chosen by the King out of a list of five members, whose names were sent up to him by the Chamber. The Chamber now elects its own President without the interposition of the King in any way. Frequent changes take place in the Presidency of the Chamber. The same person

does not often enjoy the office for many years in succession. The late Casimir Périer received the appointment seven times, in seven successive years. I am not aware of any other instance of a member receiving such repeated proofs of the estimation in which he was held by the Chamber. Before the Revolution of 1830, the office was an object of importance in a pecuniary point of view, for the salary was then 100,000 francs, or £4000 per annum. Since the adoption of the new Charter, economy has been the order of the day, and the Presidency of the Chamber has not escaped the application of the cutting-down principle. The salary now attached to the office is 4000 francs, or £160, per month,—which, as the session rarely sits more than six months would make its annual value less than £1000,—hardly a seventh part of the sum, including house, plate, and furniture, which the Speaker of our House of Commons yearly receives for his services.

The members of the Chamber are chosen by ballot. The mayor of each department assembles the electors whenever an election is to take place,—the necessary precautions having been previously taken that none but right names be entered on the electoral list. Every elector has then slips of paper given him, containing the names of the various candidates, and he puts the name of the one whom he wishes to see returned into a box provided for the purpose. When all have voted in this way, the box is opened, the slips are taken out, and the number of votes in favour of each candidate counted. If he who has the highest number, (supposing the number of candidates to be three,) and has one third more votes than either of his two opponents, he is declared duly returned; but if not, then the candidate having the lowest number is put aside, and a new contest takes place between the first and second most successful candidates. He who has then the majority is de-

clared elected. Should it happen that the number is equal, the oldest candidate—the French always paying a particular respect to seniority of years—is the party on whom the choice of the electors is said to have fallen.

I mentioned in a previous part of the work that limited as is the elective franchise in this country, it is still more so in France. The constituency of the United Kingdom is not much under 425,000. In France it does not exceed 150,000, or little more than a third of what it is in this country, though France contains a population which exceeds ours by nearly one-fourth. The disparity, too, between the number of members of the French Chamber and that of the House of Commons, is strikingly great. France has only 459 representatives for its population, of 34,000,000, while Great Britain and Ireland have 658 for their 24,000,000. The French loudly complain of this. Even those most opposed to change in the abstract, admit

that a change is necessary, both in reference to the number of the electors and the number of the representatives; and I may add that the universal conviction is that such a change cannot be long delayed.

CHAPTER IX.

THE THEATRES.

Fondness of the French for amusements—Illustrations given —Numbers attending the theatres—The way which theatres are regulated—Parisian audiences—The leading establishments—Miscellaneous observations.

THE French are remarkable for their love of amusement. It is essential to their existence. It as necessary to their mental being as the food they eat or the air they breathe is to their physical enjoyment. Deprive a Parisian of the means of amusing himself, and you divest life of half its attractions. In his eye the theatre possesses peculiar charms. He never enjoys himself so

much as when in the atmosphere of a theatre. Give an Englishman a good dinner, and he is satisfied. His ideas of supreme earthly bliss are centred on at able groaning with the varied luxuries that make up a good dinner. Let it not be supposed from this that I mean to say a Frenchman is insensible to the charms of a dinner; neither, I suppose, are the people of any country. But if the choice happens to lie between an excellent dinner and the theatre, he will not hesitate an instant in preferring the latter. To be sure, he thinks both best, provided both can be had; and he will leave no stone unturned to get his dinner first, and the theatre afterwards; but if both be impossible, then the dinner may, like Macbeth's physic, be thrown to the dogs. It is the reverse with an Englishman. Give him a good dinner, and he has no wish to put foot in a theatre, or any other place. His notion is that, he could not by any change of position better himself. Even Kean himself, when in the zenith of his histrionic reputation,

never prevented a single genuine Englishman from accepting an invitation to a good dinner. In Paris, the unexpected appearance of Mademoiselle Rachael in a new character, in the Theatre Français, would cause a dozen fashionable dinner parties, previously resolved on, to be postponed. It may seem incredible to an Englishman, but such is the fact, that many of the Parisians actually include the money they mean to devote to the theatre, as an item in their necessary annual expenditure. A man, for example, who can afford to live at the rate of 4000 francs per annum, will set apart the sum of 100 or 120 francs for his theatrical expenses.

Were a person in easy circumstances to suffer a fortnight to elapse without visiting a theatre, there would seem to be something so strange in the circumstance, that it would be considered a fit topic of conversation among his friends. A love of theatrical representations is a consuming passion with the Parisian. Nor is this passion

confined to the higher or middle orders of society: it is equally prevalent among the humbler classes. What does the reader think is the average nightly attendance at the theatres in Paris? It is about 18,000, and this, be it remembered, every night, Sundays included, in the week, and all the year round: for only two theatres, the Italian Opera, and another whose name has escaped my memory, close at all, and the latter but for a brief season. I will undertake to say, though London contains twice the population of Paris, it will be found, after due allowances are made for the length of time, often four and five months, during which a number of our theatres are shut up, and the thinness of the houses at particular parts of the year,—that not more, on an average, than 6000, or a third part of the attendance at the Paris theatres, nightly visit the theatres of the English metropolis. Making, indeed, due allowances for the difference in the amount of the population of the two places, the Parisians are six times

more of a theatre-going people than the people of London.

And yet remarkable as is the taste of the Parisians of the present day for theatrical amusements, it is nothing to what it was half a century ago. It was then an insatiable and universal passion. The Parisian could not have lived unless he spent his evenings in the theatre. Though the population of the place was then only 650,000, there were no fewer than thirty theatres nightly open, and all of them crowded to excess. What is more extraordinary still, even during the most dreadful days of the Reign of Terror, when the streets of Paris streamed with the blood of its citizens, the theatres were all open, and filled in every part. Not even the executions, the murders, and massacres of the day, horrible as were the circumstances under which many of them took place, could inspire a disrelish for dramatic representations in the evening. Such, indeed, was the intensity which this passion for the theatre at length

acquired, that Government found it necessary to interpose its authority, and put a check upon it, by shutting up twenty of the thirty theatres. At this period, making requisite allowances for the difference in the population of the two capitals, twenty persons must have visited the theatre in Paris, for every one that visits the theatres of London. The reader will be astonished to learn, that at this time, when the theatrical passion was at its greatest height, no fewer than from 2000 to 2250 new pieces, were sometimes brought out in the course of a single year. It will at once be understood that when so many were produced, immense numbers of them must have been unsuccessful. Some of the writers of the day mention that not one in twenty survived a third representation.

Surprise may be expressed, that if the successful bore so great a disproportion to the unsuccessful pieces, so many writers should have applied themselves to dramatic authorship. The explanation of the fact is to be found in the

great importance and pecuniary advantage it gave to a man to be the author of a popular drama. A dramatic author of celebrity was then a lion in all the saloons of Paris; and being allowed a certain sum over and above the original terms, for every successive representation of the piece, whether in Paris or in the provinces,—he often, received very large remuneration for his labours. Several dramatic authors derived from the continued success of their pieces, a yearly revenue sufficient to maintain themselves and families in comfort, long after they had ceased to write.

But this is a digression. In a Parisian theatre you see, in the countenances of all present, the incomparably greater interest the Parisians take in dramatic representations, than is felt in these representations in London. Here you see friends chatting and laughing, and exhibiting other signs of listlessness, during the whole of the performances. You see nothing of the kind in the theatres of Paris. A

a sound is seldom heard. If a word or two passes between friends, it is in a scarcely audible whisper, and invariably relates to the actors or the piece. Silence reigns throughout the place, save when some humorous point elicits a burst of laughter; or some tragic, or other interesting scene, is played with such effect, that the audience cannot withhold from each other the expression of their admiration. It is a sight worth seeing, to witness the countenances of a Parisian audience in one of the better class of theatres. All is intense anxiety, not only to hear what the actors say, but to observe every motion of their lips, and every change in the expression of their face. A Parisian fixes his eye on the tragedian or comedian on the stage, as if he would literally look him through. I have often wondered that such an intensity of "gazing," continued from the commencement to the close of the piece, does not disconcert the performers, and unfit them for the discharge of their histrionic duties.

So absorbing is the interest which the Parisians take in theatricals, and so passionately fond are they of good acting, that in all the best scenes a very large part of the audience in the upper parts of the theatre, are to be seen with out-stretched necks, standing on their feet. Such a circumstance is never witnessed in the theatres of London. Then, again, the Parisian seems, while witnessing the representation of a meritorious piece, to be absolutely chained down to the spot, until the evening's entertainments are over. How different in England. What innumerable signs and symptoms of impatience does an English audience betray until the piece be over. Scores, it may be, leave before the first piece, if a long one, is ended. On its conclusion, you see something like a general rising. It is true, that many of those who go out between the acts, return again; but it is also true, that great numbers do not. In Paris, on the contrary, the audience appear as if they would never tire. Their passion for theatricals

seems as if it were insatiable. An English audience are glad when the performances are over; Parisians quit the theatre with regret. You may occasionally see a person leaving the theatre before the last piece has commenced, but that is from necessity, not choice; it is because the party is obliged to be home at a particular time.

The external regulations of the French theatres, and the conventionalisms which prevail in the interior, are as different from those in our theatres as can well be imagined. You feel before you have entered that you are about to visit a place whose exterior mode of management, if the expression be a right one, is different from anything you have before seen; for, assuming you to go in time, so as to be present at the commencement of the performances, you will not find any hustling, or knocking of each other about, but every one entering as quietly and leisurely as possible. A passage is made, with wooden bars on either side,

from the street door to the foot of the stairs; just wide enough to allow two or three to move on abreast. Not the slightest inconvenience or pressure is felt, however great may be the number of persons who mean to enter. The most delicate lady may walk along this passage without any fear of her dress being crumpled, or of receiving the slightest injury of any kind. The same order and regularity are preserved in coming out, so that a crowd, in the proper acceptation of the term, is a thing unknown at a French theatre.

The interior arrangements of the Paris theatres, so far as the audience are concerned, are all that could be desired. Everything is done by the proprietors which is possible for them to do, to promote the comfort of the patrons of the drama. A number of women are stationed along all the passages, to open and lock the doors of the boxes; and to see, when any of the audience leave their places, between the acts, that no one takes them. No women of

improper character are allowed to enter the boxes in which respectable people are sitting; nor are they permitted to hover about the passages, or to appear in the saloons. Were a foreigner unacquainted with Paris, to judge of the morals of the people from what he sees in the theatres, he would conclude that they were the chastest people in the world; and that the class of persons calling themselves, in this country, "unfortunate females," were wholly unknown in the capital of France. There is nothing in a French theatre which can offend the eye of the most delicate person; neither is there, with few exceptions, anything in the pieces to offend the ear. Though the modern light literature of France, as I shall afterwards have occasion to show, is most objectionable on the score of morality, and even of decency, there is not, generally speaking, anything impure in its current dramatic literature. Even with all our boasted regard for purity, and our vaunted abhorrence of anything that could crimson the

cheek of female modesty, the French are before us in reference to their dramatic representations. There are many of our most popular modern pieces, as well as of our standard comedies, written towards the close of the last century, which are full of very improper expressions,—worse even than *double entendres*. When I speak of the comparative freedom of the dramatic literature of France from anything impure, I speak of the pieces which are performed at the leading theatres. There are several minor, *very* minor houses, in different parts of Paris, of the moral character of whose dramas, if dramas they can be called, I can say nothing.

But I must not digress. I was speaking of the arrangements which are made for the comfort of the audiences in the Parisian theatres. There are excellent saloons, though not quite so tastefully fitted up as those in our leading theatres, in all the principal establishments of Paris. To these the great majority of the male part of the audience repair between the acts. All parts of

the house communicate with the saloon; and all those in the gallery and pit, as well as the occupants of boxes, have a right to enter. And it is curious to see the perfect order with which all who have been in the saloon return to their respective places. It might be supposed that some who had been sitting in the gallery, would seek to enter the pit (thinking they would not be discovered in the crowd), when the next piece was about to commence; or that some one who had been in the pit, would now endeavour to smuggle himself into a seat in some of the boxes. Nothing of the kind occurs: no such attempt is ever made. A Frenchman is incapable of any such littleness. Every one returns to his own place. In less than a minute after notice is given that the representation of the next piece is about to commence, you see the whole audience comfortably seated, and ready to enjoy the treat that awaits them.

Though all the attendants in the theatre vie with each other in their politeness to the audi-

ence, none of them ever receive, and do not expect, any gratuity for their services. How different in the theatres of London. The party who does not give the London box-keeper a gratuity, receives from the latter a look which is enough to incapacitate him the whole evening for enjoying the performances.

In most of the theatres there are three or four ranges of benches, between the pit and orchestra, which are charged the same price as the first class of boxes, not private, in either of the upper tiers. They are comfortably cushioned, and not only have backs against which to lean, but are so formed as to resemble so many arm chairs. In connection with the pits of the leading Parisian theatres, I ought here to mention, that no ladies are ever seen in them. They are exclusively occupied by gentlemen, and are preferred to any other part of the house by those who plume themselves on their supposed acquirements as critics of histrionic performances.

Another peculiarity in the Parisian theatres is, that they have no half-price. However late a person may be in going to any of them, he must pay full price. There is a mode, however, in which admission may sometimes be obtained at a reduced rate,—occasionally as low as half-price. It is when some of the audience, who were present at the commencement, are obliged to leave the theatre early. In such a case, they can dispose of the tickets giving them a right to return, to parties who are always in attendance to purchase them. These persons will give half-price for the tickets, if the performances are not half over. If the performances are little more than newly commenced, more than half-price will sometimes be got for the right of admission. The tickets so purchased are re-sold, at a small profit, to others. In fact, a little trade is carried on in this way at the doors of the principal theatres. Availing themselves of the facility of disposing of their ticket in this way, Englishmen sometimes contrive to see

three or four of the leading theatres in one night, at little more than the price of admission to one establishment.

There is a great want of appropriate and effective scenery in most of the Parisian theatres. Compared with the scenery in our metropolitan theatres, that in Paris is hardly deserving the name. There is, too, a want of taste in the management of the accessories. Most Englishmen who have thought on the subject, must, for example, have discovered the manifest incongruity between the representation of the interior of a house on the stage, and what it is in reality. In the theatres you see representations of nicely carpeted rooms: in real houses there are no carpets at all. I never saw a carpet, during the time I was in the French capital, except on one occasion, and that was in the house of an English family.

There is, however, one thing in which we are guilty of an incongruity, while the French, in that particular matter, act in accordance

with the dictates of propriety. I refer to the circumstance of a popular actor acknowledging, by repeated low bows, any demonstration of applause with which he may be greeted when first entering, for the evening, on the stage. For instance, Mr. Macready coming on the stage as the representative of Henry the Eighth, at once merges the monarch in the actor, by taking off his hat and bowing to the audience when they receive him with a loud expression of applause. Bartley, as Sir John Falstaff, though so fat as to be seemingly incapable of motion of any kind, shows that he can make a series of very low and lively bows to the gods, in return for their vociferous cheers when he appears on the stage. And Miss Helen Faucit, as Lady Macbeth, divests herself for the moment of all her sternness of purpose and decision of character, in order that she may smile and curtsey to the audience, in return for their hearty gratulations. Not so with the French actor. However enthusiastically he may

be received on his appearance on the stage, he takes no notice of the exhibition of feeling made in his favour. He seems, indeed, wholly unconscious of it, in the plenitude of his anxiety to be considered the character he has undertaken to personate. If he receive any demonstration of applause when the performances are over, and when he is understood to be "himself again,"—he will promptly come forward and gratefully acknowledge it. In this matter the French are right, and we wrong.

It may now be proper to make a slight reference, in detail, to a few of the leading theatres in Paris, as the reader may, by that means, be better able to form some idea of them.

The Royal Academy of Music, or French Opera-house, holds, in Paris, the same rank among the theatres of that place, which the Italian Opera does here. It is exclusively devoted to the performance of operas. The locality of the French Opera-house was formerly in the vicinity of the Palais Royal; but the Duke de

Berry having been assassinated at its door, in 1820, it was pulled down, in order that a monument might be erected on the spot to his memory. The locality of the present French Opera communicates with three streets, namely, Lepelletier, Pinon, and Grange Batelière. The exterior of the building is not imposing, but the interior is fitted up in a very superior manner. Some of the decorations are exceedingly beautiful. It is allowed to surpass immeasurably all the other theatres for the excellence of its scenery. The same may be said of the costumes of the performers. It is mostly supported by the higher and middle classes. Its orchestra is admitted, on all hands, to be superior to that of the Italian Opera here; it is, indeed, unrivalled anywhere. It is, however, equally admitted by every competent judge, that the singing is inferior to what is to be heard in our Italian Opera. In dancing, again, the Parisian Opera-house is unapproachable by any other similar establishment in the world. This is not to be wondered at:

on the contrary, it is just what might be expected: for the French are a nation of dancers, just as the people of some other countries are a nation of musicians. What strikes the spectator of a dancing scene in the Opera-house of Paris, is not so much the surpassing feâts of some particular *danseuse*, as the excellence—an almost uniform excellence—of all. Here there are one or two *artistes*, such as Fanny Elsler, whose almost fairy evolutions and movements prove sufficiently attractive to draw the whole fashionable world of London to the Opera: in Paris, it is the general excellence of the dancing company which proves the source of attraction. Hence it is that an unrivalled *danseuse* like Fanny Elsler obtains, in London, twice the terms which she can procure in Paris.

The French Opera-house is one of the two Parisian theatres that do not perform nightly. Like our Italian Opera, it is open only three nights in the week, namely, Monday, Wednesday, and

Friday. The prices of admission are lower than with us, being only ten francs, or eight shillings and fourpence, to the balcony, which holds the same place in Paris as private boxes do here. The lowest price of admission, which is to the pit, is two francs and fifty centimes, or two shillings and a penny of our money. There are intermediate prices for various other localities in the house. The building is fitted up to contain nearly 2000 persons.

The Italian Opera is principally patronised by the higher classes. Italian operas were first introduced into Paris nearly two centuries ago, by Cardinal Mazarin. The immediate object for which they were so, was the amusement of Anne of Austria. As this theatre does not excite much interest in Paris, it is not necessary that a particular reference should be made to it. It is open only for six months in the year—from the first of October to the end of March. The evenings of performance are Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Occasionally, under

particular circumstances, it is open also on Sundays. The highest price of admission is ten francs, and the lowest two francs.

The Theatre Français is, among the Parisian theatres, what Drury Lane and Covent Garden are among the theatres of London. It is the place for the representation of the legitimate drama of France. It is the national theatre,—the only house in which the plays of Racine, Corneille, Moliere, Voltaire, and the other distinguished authors of tragedy and comedy, are performed. It was here that Talma achieved his extraordinary triumphs in the department of tragedy. It was here also that Mademoiselle Mars won all her trophies in comedy. With the single exception of Mademoiselle Rachel, there has, of late, been no tragedian or comedian, of either sex, who has reached the higher walks of the histrionic art. The theatre is not worthy of any particular commendation for its internal decorations; neither is there anything imposing in its external appearance. It is ca-

pable of containing 1500 persons. The highest price is six francs and sixty centimes, and the lowest price is one franc and twenty-five centimes, which is equal to one shilling and a half-penny. The situation of the Theatre Français is near the south-west corner of the Palais Royal; and the entrance is from the Rue Richelieu.

Next in importance is the Opera Comique. It is in some respects the favourite theatre in Paris. It is nightly crowded with admiring and delighted audiences. The character of the pieces, and the style and quality of the acting, very much remind an Englishman of the representations in the Olympic during the lesseeship of Madame Vestris. A short description of its interior will give an idea of the better class of Parisian theatres generally. It contains three rows of benches, which are the same price as boxes, between the orchestra and the pit. Around the pit, but a few feet higher, are a kind of boxes, containing two ranges of seats. Above

there are the first, second, and third tier of boxes, each containing two rows of occupants. Farther back, on the first and second tiers, is a range of boxes, which are considered the same as our private boxes. Higher up still are two galleries,—the first and second. These bear a nearer resemblance to the boxes in our theatres than to our galleries. They are exceedingly comfortable places, were it not for their great height. This theatre is considered one of the most tastefully fitted up in Paris, and yet there is a want of elegance in it, as compared with the theatres of London. The light, with the exception of what is emitted from the gas at the front of the stage, comes from a heavy-looking chandelier in the centre of the house. There is one peculiarity in the Opera Comique, which contributes in no small degree to render it a favourite with the better classes of society. I allude to the circumstance of a small saloon being attached to every second box, and fitted up with great taste. To these *petit* saloons many

of the audience retire between the acts, and partake of refreshments, which are always to be had the moment they are ordered. The orchestra is numerous. It consists of between fifty and sixty persons; but the general opinion of those who are musical judges is, that it is not so effective as it was eight or ten years ago. I have not seen or heard any statement of the number of persons the place can accommodate, but, judging from a glance of the eye, I should suppose it would contain 1200 or 1300 with comfort. The pit alone, I should think, has ample accommodation for 400. The Opera Comique is situated in the Place Favart, near the Boulevards. It is, perhaps, the most substantial theatrical building in Paris, but has not anything striking in its external aspect. This is hardly to be regretted, owing to its being surrounded by houses, which would prevent its being seen to advantage, however fine, as an architectural, edifice it might be. The prices of admission vary from two francs to seven francs

and a half,—that is, from twenty-pence to six shillings and threepence.

The Vaudeville Theatre is the next of the places, devoted to dramatic representations, which is deserving of notice. It is in the Place de la Bourse, opposite the splendid Hall of Commerce,—the place in which all operations in the funds are made, and in which sits a tribunal for the decision of all litigated questions connected with the commerce of France. The interior decorations are, on the whole, tasteful, though far inferior to what might be expected from a people so celebrated for their taste as the French. The name of the theatre indicates the character of the pieces performed. They are exceedingly light and superficial. There is little of intellect in them. They address themselves by a sort of playing upon, or happy arrangement of, words, to the ear, rather than to the mind. The acting is not much above mediocrity; still it pleases a certain portion of the Parisian community, and the place is well at-

tended. The number it can comfortably accommodate is about 1200. The highest price of admission is six francs, the lowest a franc and a half. The intermediate prices are five francs, four francs and a half, and four francs.

The Theatre of Varieties is, as nearly as may be, the size of the Opera Comique; the number of persons it is built to accommodate being 1240. It is one of the neatest of the theatres. It is a great favourite. Its situation on the Boulevard Montmartre is much in its favour. It is celebrated for the amusing character of its pieces, which are invariably short. The French are not so fond of broad farce as the English; but the broadest to be seen in Paris is to be witnessed here. The prices are the same as those of the Opera Comique, with this difference, that the lowest price, instead of being a franc and a half, is two francs.

I have spoken of the theatres of Paris as being twelve in number. I should here explain, that when I mention this number, I al-

lude to theatres in which regular dramas are represented. There are various other theatres, some of them very numerously attended, in which there are various performances, not coming under the name of dramatic representations. For instance, there is Franconi's Equestrian Theatre, in the Champs Elysées, where the performances are exactly the same as at our Astley's. This house is in the circular form, and is capable of containing a greater number of persons than any other building I have ever seen. It can accommodate the extraordinary number of 8000 persons. I myself have seen about 5500 in it. Though it has been built within the last five years, the profits, it is said, have already defrayed the expenses of the erection. I should not wonder if this were true, as the expenses of conducting the establishment (the performers being principally members of the proprietor's family) must, as compared with the other theatres, be exceedingly small. The charges for admission are one franc

to the gallery, and two francs to the pit. There are no boxes; though the seats in the pit are so arranged, as to make a sort of box for each occupant. Now supposing that out of the 5500 persons who, on an average, are supposed nightly to frequent the place during the summer months, 2000 pay two francs, that would give a sum of £160, while the remaining 3500, at one franc each, would be equivalent to £140; making £300 in all, as the nightly receipts.

There are at least a dozen more very small theatres, somewhat resembling, both in the character of the performances, the composition of the audience, and the prices of admission, those Penny Theatres which abounded in London, until they were put down by the authorities in 1839. These places are frequented by the lowest classes of the community, mostly young persons. The pieces, if they deserve the name, sometimes abound with incidents of the most horrible kind; and at other times are ludicrous, from the extent to which they out-

rage everything in nature or reality. The prices of admission vary from four sous (twopence) to eight sous (fourpence).

A piece at the Parisian theatres is very rarely damned on the first night of its production. A number of persons called *claqueurs* are hired for the purpose of applauding it, which they do most vociferously, from the time the curtain rises till it falls again. I do not very clearly see the advantage of this arrangement, because these paid applauders not being present on the second night of its representation, the piece runs the risk, if an inferior production, of being then condemned. It may be, that both the writer and the proprietors of the theatres suppose, that if the first night be got through with any measure of *eclât*, there will be less danger the next representation, as there will not only not be so many persons of the critical cast present, but the actors may be expected to be more perfect and at home in their parts. Be this as it may, if a piece survives a second

representation, it may be considered to have a fair chance of being frequently repeated; if it is well received on a third representation, both author and actors conclude that it is destined to have a run.

I should here mention, that though new pieces are generally submitted to the proprietors of theatres, and are brought before the public, as being the production of one dramatist, they are, in the great majority of cases, the result of the combined labours of two or three individuals. One writer undertakes the invention of the plot, another "works out," as it is called, the ideas of the first; and, where there is a third engaged in the production of the piece, it is his duty to see that there are no striking improbabilities in the different incidents constituting the story, and that the individual "working out" the plot has done his part of the business effectively,—not only writing well, so far as relates to mere composition, but giving due prominency to particular incidents, and not

*un*due prominency to others. The proceeds, when a piece is successful, are divided among the two, or the three persons (all of whom claim to be considered dramatists), according to a previous arrangement.

In this country, and I have no doubt in every country, a dramatic writer, and especially when it is his maiden effort, is very much mortified at the failure of his piece. But this mortification and disappointment are felt with a double force in France. Possibly the reason of this may be found in the fact, that the prize which has been lost is much greater in France than in this country; the rewards of successful dramatic authorship there, as I shall afterwards show, being much greater than here. But whether this hypothesis be right or wrong, the fact is as I have stated. In England no one ever hears of an unsuccessful dramatist next day committing suicide: in France such an occurrence is by no means rare. Perhaps the most affecting instance of the kind on record, was

one which occurred in 1831 or 1832,—I do not remember which year. Two young men of sanguine temperament, both of whom had buoyed themselves up with the hope of achieving distinction, and earning a comfortable living, as dramatic authors, applied themselves with great assiduity for a considerable time, to the composition of a piece for one of the theatres. At length the piece was finished: it was accepted and produced. It proved a decided failure. They were both so deeply mortified at the circumstance of a drama, in the preparation of which they had spent weeks and months of anxious solicitude, being unqualifiedly condemned, that they at once made up their minds to commit suicide. They returned to their miserable lodgings, composed a short piece of poetry in reference to the circumstance, and then destroyed themselves. The occurrence excited a very great sensation in Paris at the time; but the Parisians are so

accustomed to "romantic affairs," that it was very speedily forgotten.

All pieces offered for representation at the theatres, are submitted to a dramatic committee. It is for this committee to say whether it be a work of merit or otherwise. The result but too often shows,—the result, I mean, as regards accepted pieces (of the merits of those that are rejected, we can know nothing),—that the judgments of bodies of men are sometimes as little to be relied on as the judgment of a private individual.

The number of persons in Paris who live, or rather, in many instances, attempt to live, by their dramatic writings, is from 150 to 180. Of this number, only some ten or twelve or so, can be said to be popular dramatists. The best known, and, I believe, the most successful of the dramatic writers in France, is Alexander Dumas. He and three or four others are understood to make large sums of money by their dramatic productions.

The rate of remuneration for dramatic pieces at the leading theatres may be briefly mentioned. At the Theatre Français, the author, if his piece extends to five acts, is entitled to receive the twelfth part of the receipts. If the piece be in three acts, he receives an eighteenth share of the money received at the doors; if only in two acts, his remuneration is a twenty-fourth part of the net receipts. At the Comic Opera, the rate of payment is eight and a half per cent. of the receipts for three-act pieces, and six per cent. for pieces extending only to one or two acts. This includes the remuneration of the composer as well as author. Usually they receive equal shares. At the Vaudeville, the Theatre of Varieties, and several of the other establishments, where the pieces are short, rarely occupying more than from three-quarters of an hour to an hour in the representation, the author receives three per cent. on the receipts. At the French Opera, there is a peculiar arrangement, the author and composer each re-

ceiving a certain sum for his labours, without reference to the success or otherwise of the opera. The maximum sum which the composer, who occupies a much higher place in operatic estimation than the author, receives is, 500 francs, or £20 per night. Probably the average sum may be £15 per night. The author's average does not exceed £10. At the smaller theatres the mode of payment for a piece is the same as at the London theatres. The author receives a certain sum without reference to the success or failure of the piece. But then, if the piece becomes popular, it is sure to be represented in the provinces, and for every such representation the author receives a certain sum agreeably to a tariff established for the purpose by the French Dramatic Association. This arrangement exists not only during his life, but for ten years after his death,—his family, for that period, receiving the benefit of it. Formerly a dramatist's interest in his works extended to the second and third generation; and instances were

known in which a dramatist's grandchildren were provided for, from the continued popularity of his works. It is not more than thirty years since the grand-daughter of the celebrated Corneille died, and up to the hour of her death she was in the receipt of a handsome yearly income from the representation of the dramas of her gifted ancestor.

It is a curious fact, that notwithstanding the passionate fondness with which the Parisians regard theatrical amusements, the managers of the various houses can make experiments on their patience, which no manager would venture to make in England, where the dramatic feeling is immeasurably less ardent. A Parisian manager will sometimes go so far, when any little incident occurs at the last moment to prevent his bringing out a promised new piece on the night he had intended,—as not only to postpone indefinitely the production of the new drama, but even decline playing *that* night at all; and consequently, in effect, to tell the audi-

ence that they must quit the place. One night when I was in Paris, such an incident occurred at the Theatre of Varieties. A large audience, probably about 1200 persons, had assembled to witness the production of the new piece. Seven o'clock, the hour appointed for the rise of the curtain, came. No curtain rose, nor showed any symptoms of an intention to rise for full ten minutes afterwards. Until now the audience bore the unexplained disappointment in the very best temper,—with indeed a measure of patience which inspired me with a most exalted notion of the philosophy of the French people. Even French politeness, however, has its limits. Symptoms of impatience did at length begin to betray themselves. Just as matters began to assume an aspect, which made the Englishmen present apprehensive lest there should be a theatrical revolution,—the curtain drew up, and forth on the stage stepped the leading man among the actors. Without a word of apology —a very extraordinary omission for a French-

man—he at once told them, that owing to unforeseen circumstances, the new piece could not be brought out that evening. Every one whispered to his friend an expression of disappointment; but it was confined to mere words. The gentlemen took up their hats, the ladies adjusted their dresses, and all quitted the theatre without any expression of anger, or even a frown on any face. Had this occurred in England, what would have been the consequences? Why, nothing less than this,—that the audience would have broken the benches into a thousand fragments, and torn the whole interior of the place to pieces. They would have got up a "piece" or scene for themselves, which might have proved very unpleasant, personally, to the proprietors and managers of the house. John Bull is not a person to be trifled with.

There is one very curious custom which prevails in Paris, in reference to the production of new pieces. I allude to the circumstance of no critique on the piece appearing in any of the

journals the following day. Even the appearance of some new candidate for histrionic fame, whose *debût* has created a great sensation, because great hopes of its being successful had been excited, does not induce the Parisian papers to depart from their rule. In some instances, it is true, the journals do mention, in two or three lines, as a matter of news, that Monsieur, or Madame, or Mademoiselle So-and-So, appeared for the first time at a particular theatre, and was successful; or otherwise, if the case happened to be so,—but not a whisper is given of the journalist's private opinion as to the merits or demerits of the new aspirant at histrionic honours. The criticism is deferred for a few days,—sometimes for four or five days. All the leading journals, indeed, have a particular day in the week which they set apart for notices of the theatrical proceedings of the previous eight days. How different with us. A daily journal would suffer materially in character, if it allowed more than one day to pass without an

elaborate criticism on any new piece of importance that appeared at any of the leading theatres. Such criticism, deferred for three, four, or five days, would almost be enough to make the journal ridiculous.

And yet the Parisian critics have far greater facilities afforded them than are possessed by the London journalists, for witnessing to advantage the representation of new pieces, or of forming their opinion of the qualifications for the stage of any new candidate for histrionic fame. Every respectable journalist has always a private box at his disposal, and which, though capable, in most instances, of containing five persons, he can have the whole evening to himself, without molestation from any one. The theatrical critics of the London journals, on the other hand, must submit to the inconvenience of being in a part of the theatre in which there are fourteen or fifteen persons, all, most probably, strangers to him. He is subject to the annoyance of having his attention ever and

anon diverted from the piece or the acting, by the frequent audible remarks of those beside him.—The press is much more respected by the proprietors of theatres in Paris, than it is by the same parties in London; and yet the London journals are much more attentive to theatrical matters than those of Paris.

Theatrical property is, on the whole, much better in France than it is in this country. Failures of theatres are of much more rare occurrence in Paris than in London. Still there is something very anomalous in their pecuniary condition. Each of them is made to contribute a tenth part of its nightly receipts (not *profits*, as I have often seen it stated) to the maintenance of the poor. The police attend every evening, and see what the exact amount of the receipts is,—so that, even were they so disposed, the proprietors of theatrical establishments could not deceive the Government as to what that exact amount is. And yet, while Government thus takes from the theatres with the one hand,

it bestows large sums on the leading ones among them with the other. The amount paid in the year ending in June 1842, by the various theatres of note, to the fund for the benefit of the poor, was as follows. I preserve the French names of the several theatres.—

	Francs.
Academie Royale de Musique	118,144
Cirque Olympique	92,128
Opera Comique	76,875
Italiens	67,848
Français	65,676
Palais Royal	53,674
Gaité	52,981
Gymnase	46,621
Porte St. Martin	46,468
Vaudeville	45,972
Variétés	44,110
Folies Dramatiques	27,673
Ambigu Comique	25,023
Porte St. Antoine	6,870
Saqui	4,591
Delassemens Comiques	4,437
Odèon	3,538

Making a total of 776,839 francs, or £31,075. It will occur to the reader, that, as this sum is a tenth, not of the profits, but of the entire re-

ceipts, the gross receipts of the leading Parisian theatres must have been, in the year ending June 1842, £326,950.

But while Government exacts a tenth part of the receipts of the principal theatres, in the shape of a tax, for the benefit of the poor, it bestows, on four of their number, considerable sums of the public money to enable them to keep open. The favoured four are the French Opera-house, the Italian Opera, the French Theatre, and the Comič Opera-house. To the first is yearly allotted the large sum of 760,000 francs, being more than six times the amount of its quota to the poor. In addition to this, the sum of 130,000 francs is annually given by Government, in the shape of pensions, to retired performers. The payment of the sum allowed to the Italian Opera was lately suspended for three years; for what reason I have been unable to learn. The theatre has, however, been again restored to the list of houses entitled to partake of the Government allowance; though what the

amount now is, I have not been able to ascertain. To the French Theatre there is made the annual allowance of 266,000 francs; being more than three times the amount it pays to the poor out of its receipts. The sum which the Comic Opera receives, is 246,000 francs per annum, which is also more than three times the amount furnished out of its exchequer for the support of the poor.

CHAPTER X.

MILITARY MATTERS.

The army—Pay of the officers and privates—Conditions on which pensions are allowed—Prevalence of the military spirit—Desirableness of quenching the military spirit.

THE interest which attaches to the French army, not only in France itself, but in Europe generally, renders it necessary that I should devote a little more space to the subject than could be conveniently allowed when incidentally touching on it in the chapter on the "System of Government."

And first of all I may remark, that the prac-

tice which prevails in this country, of purchasing commissions in the army, is wholly unknown in France. All enter by the same door,—namely, by voluntary enlistment, or by conscription, as privates. The idea of a person entering the army, a full-fledged officer, as with us, strikes the French as ridiculous. Hence it is that so many of the sons of the first families in France, are to be found in the ranks, living on the same scanty and homely fare, sleeping in the same beds, and submitting, in all respects, to the same privations, as the sons of the poorest peasants.

French soldiers are poorly paid. The officers receive but a very small allowance compared with the pay received by the officers in the English army. The pittance of the privates is also small—so small as hardly to be credited in this country. A Colonel in the cavalry only receives £275 per annum; a Colonel in the infantry £250; a Captain in the infantry of the first class, £144, and a Captain of the second class, £120. The various other grades of officers

are paid in the same proportion. But the allowance of the private is still more miserably small. Nominally he receives four-pence-halfpenny, per day, but in reality not more than three-halfpence are available to him for pocket money. From his allowance, one penny is deducted for the purpose of forming a small fund out of which he may supply himself with the requisite linen and stockings, and other little articles, such as shaving and washing materials. Three halfpence are withheld for his food, which is always taken in mess. Another halfpenny is taken from him for some other purpose, which was mentioned to me by one of the soldiers, but it has escaped my memory. So that after all these deductions are made, he has no more than three-halfpence per diem to keep his pocket.

How, it will be asked, does the French soldier contrive to manage on so small a sum? He could not manage at all were it not that he has, in most cases, some other means of re-

plenishing his pockets. The French soldiers are not, as with us, the refuse of society,—men whose profligate habits have driven them into the army. They are mostly the sons of farmers and tradesmen in easy circumstances; and their parents, in the majority of cases, supply them with pocket money during the period of their service. You cannot walk the streets of Paris without perceiving that they are a much superior class of persons to our soldiers. You see intelligence in their faces, and what the French call style in their manner. When not on duty you see them in twos and threes in the streets and at public places walking arm-in-arm together. Many of them are great readers, and others are artists. I one day saw, in the Louvre, a private copying a large painting by one of the first masters, and so well was it done, that none but an artist could have discovered any difference between the copy and the original.

The French soldiers are only allowed two meals a day. The first, or breakfast, is at nine

in the morning, and the other, or dinner, is at five in the afternoon. Both meals are nearly the same. They consist of soup, meat, vegetables, and brown bread. On every fifth day there are no meat dinners, but simply potatoes and rice. No beer or *vin ordinaire* is allowed. Their drink is bad water, with about a glass of brandy poured into as much of it as will suffice for sixteen persons.

The period of service in the French army is seven years. At the expiration of that time a soldier receives his discharge, and is free to go where he pleases. Some of them, probably one out of every six or seven, re-enter the army by voluntary enlistment. The others, in nearly every instance, return to their native place. Those who re-enter the army by voluntarily enlisting, do so for periods of two or four years. If for two years, the soldier receives a bounty of twenty-two francs; if for four years, a bounty of forty-four francs, and the addition of a penny per

diem to his pay. Not more than 5000 or 6000 men enter the army every year by voluntary enlistment, but in a time of war, or when war was expected, from 40,000 to 50,000 have been known to enlist in the King's service.

The discipline of the French army is not so rigid as ours. The barbarous practice of flogging is unknown in France. The greatest offence which a soldier can commit is that of insulting his superior. To strike an officer subjects the offender to the punishment of death.

Perhaps the greatest inducement to soldiers to re-enter voluntarily the army after a service of seven years, is to be found in the certainty of promotion according to a fixed scale, graduating with the soldier's length of service. I need not enter into the details of the steps by which a private soldier can rise to the highest rank in the army. It may be enough to state that he who remains a certain length of time in the service, and conducts himself with

propriety, may reasonably hope to reach the summit of military promotion.

In the French army, as in ours, length of service, or wounds received in battle, entitle to a pension. In a time of peace, thirty years' service are required to entitle to a pension, but in a time of war fifteen years suffice. Every two years' service in the colonies count as three. The lowest rate of pension for a common soldier is 200 francs or £8 per annum, and the highest rate is 300 francs or £12 a year. The scale varies, as a matter of course, with the different ranks in the army. The widows and children of all who die in battle, receive about a fourth part of what their husbands or fathers would have been entitled to receive. A small pension, rarely exceeding £5 per annum, is also settled on the widows of pensioners.

The French are a military people. This would be sufficiently apparent, had we no other evidence on the point, than is involved in the

fact that the army of France is little short of 400,000,—being more than four times the amount of the English army. And everything which can be done has been done by the State to foster the military spirit. The public buildings in Paris are crowded with pictures of battles in which the French army has been successful, and with trophies of its victories over the foes of France. The Palace of Versailles affords an instance of the former, and the Hospital of Invalids furnishes an instance of the latter. Much as you meet with in Versailles to excite your wonder and occupy your attention, there is nothing strikes you more forcibly than the number of pictorial representations of engagements in which the French have been successful. You had no idea before, that so many battles had been fought since nation began to war against nation. And as the French appear victorious in every conflict, one who knew no better would be apt to conclude

that they had never known what it was to sustain a defeat, or even to meet with a temporary reverse. You reproach yourself for not remembering, that you had ever heard of one-half of the battles which are thus commemorated as having been gained by the superiority of French prowess. You inquire into the matter, and, in many instances, find that what the artist has converted into some great military achievement, was so insignificant an affair as to be wholly unworthy of notice. Of this there can be no question, that the future historian will do no more than make a mere passing allusion to many of the military events, the remembrance of which is thus to be perpetuated on canvass; while, in many more instances, the page of history will make no mention of them at all. In the Hospital of Invalids, again, you see hundreds of the flags which the French took from their enemies, from the commencement of Napoleon's career down to the recent triumphs of the French arms, in Algiers.

And, as if these memorials of the skill and courage of the French, were not sufficient to keep up the military spirit in France, a marked attention is paid to soldiers in private society. The mere circumstance of wearing the habiliments of a military man, is a sure passport anywhere, and renders the person a favourite in all companies. The effect of all this is, to keep alive the military spirit. We can thus account for the eager desire which the French nation show to rush into a war, whenever their Government chances to come into collision with that of any other country.

It is desirable, both for the sake of Governments themselves, and of humanity generally, that something should be done to extinguish the military spirit, not only in France but wherever it exists. No country ever yet came off a gainer after having played the game of war. It is a game at which all lose. War has been the curse of the world,—the scourge of the human race. It is equally at variance with religion,

right, reason, sound policy, and humanity. My opinions on the subject are so strong, that I hold that every public writer is under a grave moral responsibility, to do all in his power to put an end to that wholesale trading in human life, which always takes place between those countries that engage in hostilities with each other. May I, therefore, be pardoned, if I here devote a few pages of this work to the expression of my views on the subject of war,—in the hope that I may in some degree contribute to the acceleration of that happy era, when the principles of Peace shall universally prevail.

And first of all let me congratulate the British public, and humanity in general, on the great exertions which the London Peace Society are making, to spread abroad correct notions on the subject of war.

The principles of that Society are making rapid progress in every civilized land, and there can be no question that they will go on achieving fresh triumphs every day, until the blessed

consummation be realized which was proclaimed by angelic voices at the Saviour's advent to be the great object of his mission,—namely, *peace* on earth and *good-will* towards men.

The abettors or advocates of war have never pretended that the wholesale destruction of human life, which invariably follows the collision of armies, is compatible with the spirit of Christianity. They are compelled to admit that war, in any shape, or under any pretext, is wholly at variance with the religion of Him who was emphatically the Prince of Peace. The wars in which countries calling themselves Christian have so often engaged, and which have in so many instances spread death and desolation over vast tracts of earth, have been attempted to be justified on other grounds. The general plea, in such cases, has been that the national glory demanded the human carnage which had been committed. Will any one tell me what is meant by "national glory" in connection with warlike achievements? As yet I

have met with no definition of the phrase. Can the destruction of the lives of our unoffending fellow-creatures have anything intrinsically glorious in it? In private life we think, and feel, and speak, in a wholly different manner. The man who, in private life, kills a fellow-man, is regarded as a murderer. He is execrated and shunned by all. The law, too, considers him no longer fit to mingle in society: it visits him with its severest penalties. Now, why should a different feeling prevail, or a different principle be applied, in the case of war? What is war but a wholesale system of killing? And is not killing equally murder, whether the deed be perpetrated in a lone chamber in the dead of night, or in the open day on the field of battle? Are we to be told that the mere circumstance of putting on a red coat, and shouldering a musket, subverts the foundations of morality, and converts an act which before would have been murder, into one which covers the party with glory? Human laws may regard the matter in this

light; but the law of Heaven—the great law by which all shall be finally judged—remains unaltered and unalterable. That law makes no such distinction; it holds the party to be equally guilty in either case.

If, indeed, there be a difference in the degree of guilt, the man who is clothed in military attire is the greater criminal of the two. Those who commit murder in private life, are generally impelled to the horrible deed by some powerful temptation, or by some sudden uncontrollable gust of passion. Pinching poverty often prompts to the murder of a man, who is known to have property. A deep irreconcilable sense of real or fancied wrongs, is an incentive to many of the murders that are committed in private life. The military murderer has no such extenuating circumstances to plead. He does his dreadful work in cold blood. He not only has no personal object to gain, no feeling of revenge to gratify, by the life which he destroys; but he never before, in all probability, saw or heard of

his unhappy victim. Nay, he often retires from the scene of action without knowing how many human beings, or who or what any of them are, he may have hurried into the presence of their Maker. And yet that which when committed by any body else, is considered a crime of the most fearful enormity, is represented as a *duty* when done by a soldier,—a duty, the due discharge of which will throw a halo of glory around him while he lives, and transmit his memory to an admiring posterity.

How long shall such false and foolish views prevail? How long shall the first principles of Christianity be openly set at nought, and the dictates of morality be disregarded? How long shall men remain ignorant of the great truth, that the mere command of a fellow-man, can never justify a violation of the law of God? If the Supreme Being declares that to take away the life of a fellow-being is to commit murder, no human command can justify, or even extenuate, the crime.

Nor is this all. Whenever in war a fellow-man is deprived of life, the crime of murder may be said to be committed by various parties. He whose bayonet or bullet does the deed, is not the only criminal. The Government which proclaims the war, the Parliament which sanctions it, and the officers who give the command, are severally implicated in the guilt of every life that is destroyed. Have our rulers and legislators ever thought of this? The consideration is a solemn one: if duly weighed, it cannot fail to have its effect in preventing future wars.

But the abstract indefensibility of war is not the only ground on which wars are to be condemned. For whose sakes have any of our great European wars been undertaken? Never for the sake of the people. Wars have always had their origin in the private jealousies, misunderstandings, or personal objects of monarchs or their ministers. Attachment to popular principles, or to the rights of man, has never yet been the sole or principal cause of any war.

The people have never been gainers; they have invariably been losers by the wars in which their rulers have involved them. England is a striking proof of this. What is the primary cause of her present crippled condition, and of that financial ruin with which she has been so often of late menaced? There can be but one answer to the question,—the repeated and protracted wars in which she has embarked. In the short space of a quarter of a century, beginning with the French Revolution of 1792, and ending with the battle of Waterloo, our attempt to put down Napoleon cost us several hundreds of millions of money,—to say nothing of the terrible expenditure of human life which took place in that unjust and unnecessary war. And out of the £800,000,000 of the national debt, which hangs like a millstone about our neck, more than £600,000,000 have been incurred to meet the expenses of the unholy wars in which England has involved herself, during the last hundred years. So that we are severely suf-

fering for the follies and crimes of our ancestors in embarking in warlike enterprises. Nor are we the only victims. Posterity, till "the last syllable of recorded time"—unless, indeed, the sponge shall be applied—are destined to groan under the intolerable burthen of taxation which these wars have laid on our shoulders.

It is true that England has engaged in no great war since the peace of 1815. But why? Not because our rulers and legislators entertain any horror of military conflict in the abstract; but because considerations of political expediency have run in favour of peace. This is not a healthy state of things. What I am anxious to witness, is a cessation of hostilities, not because war is expensive, but because it is inhuman, iniquitous, and unjust. Peace, when based on no better grounds than those of political expediency, loses half its beauty in the eyes of all enlightened men. The question then comes to be, how are more correct and more humane notions to be spread abroad on the sub-

ject? My views on this important point may be peculiar, but I feel assured I can prove them to be sound. Hitherto the reasonings and remonstrances of the friends of peace, in reference to the injustice of war, and the wretchedness which invariably follows in its train, have been exclusively addressed to persons in high places, —to the senators and the cabinets of Europe. I would suggest that the attention of the opponents of war should now be withdrawn, at least for a season, from legislatures and governments, and that it be wholly directed to that class of persons from whom the ranks are supplied. If correct notions respecting the injustice and miseries of war were sufficiently prevalent among the peasantry in rural districts, and the working men in populous towns, men would no longer enlist. No temptations in the shape of bounty, or probable promotion, would induce them to enter the army. And the necessary result would be, that if Government could not muster the requisite number of men wherewith to engage in

hostilities, no hostilities would be engaged in at all. The facility with which governments have been enabled to enlist myriads of men, and to pour them into the field of battle, has been, in all ages and in all countries, one of the greatest inducements for going to war.

But it will be asked, how are the minds of the lower classes—the persons who furnish the fighting men in all our armies—to be reached on a subject such as this? I see no difficulty in the matter. The most simple, easy, and effective plan would be, to spread among them, by means of small tracts, placards on the walls of houses, and occasional short advertisements in the newspaper press—where the press would not gratuitously open its columns to the insertion of the articles—a knowledge of the moral guilt incurred, as well as of the dreadful misery produced, by those who shed the blood of their fellow-creatures. If men could only be led to view things in their true light, and made to feel that they are not morally justified in butchering

their fellow-men, merely because their Government happens to quarrel with some other Government respecting some doubtful point connected with the boundaries of the two countries, or to fall out about some other unimportant matter—if, I say, men could only be made to take this view of the subject, and to feel that what society calls military glory is only moral murder, there would no longer be the unhappy facility which at present exists of enticing, in myriads, our working men into the army.

Nor would elaborate reasonings be needed to produce this conviction. Argument, indeed, would be unnecessary. The fact would only require to be stated, to commend itself to the judgment and the feelings of every well-regulated mind. Tell them, in the plainest terms which can be employed, that the killing of any fellow-creature is held, equally by natural and revealed religion, to be murder; and that the mere command of a Prince or his Minister to destroy human life, cannot alter the character

of the deed, nor release mankind from their obligations to obey the Divine injunction which says, "Thou shalt do no murder." Address them in this way, and you will not address them in vain; for no man who viewed the question in this light would for a moment entertain the idea of entering the army. And if there once ceased to be the requisite supply of soldiers, Princes and their Ministers would not only quarrel less frequently with other powers, but would soon discover some other mode of adjusting their differences than that of having recourse to the bullet or the sword.

But this is not all. Not only ought the friends of peace to spread through the country the knowledge of the fact, that shooting, or running one's bayonet through the body of another on the field of battle, is as much murder, in a moral point of view, as if the party were to take the life of any of his comrades; but the classes who supply our armies with men, ought to be admonished, that if they fall under the

fire of the soldiery arrayed against them, they morally incur the guilt of being, in effect, semi-suicides. If a man voluntarily places himself in a situation in which he exposes himself to the bullets or bayonets of an opposing army, he commits an act which is practically equivalent to an attempt to take away his own life.

And in dissuading men from entering the army, they ought to be reminded of the scenes of individual as well as national misery which invariably follow in the footsteps of war. I would impress on the man who contemplates becoming a soldier, that if he falls in the field of battle, his death will entail unspeakable wretchedness on the near relatives he leaves behind; and that if he kills one of the opposing force, he most probably takes a husband from an affectionate wife, and a father from poor dependant children. Let him also be told, that though he neither fall himself, nor lay any one else on the battle-field, yet that he is, in a modified sense, guilty of the death of all who perish on

either side, inasmuch as his presence there is to be held as a tacit approval of the terrible slaughter which is taking place before him.

Were the dead walls of our towns placarded with statements and appeals of this nature, and were little tracts, containing the same facts and reasonings, to be circulated among our rural population, the public mind would soon be led to view war in its true light. The consequence would be that men, instead of being, as at present, easily prevailed on to enter the army, would scarcely be induced to enter it at all; in which case, the demon of war would speedily be exiled from the earth.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

Number of Public Libraries—The King's Library—Appearance and size of the building—Regulations—Number of volumes, manuscripts, and engravings.

THE Public Libraries in the metropolis of any country afford a very correct criterion of the intelligence of its inhabitants. Where these libraries are numerous and valuable, it may fairly be inferred that there must be a taste for reading among the generality of the people. Paris is well supplied with public libraries. The entire number open to the public is fourteen;

but, in addition to these, there are about twenty smaller libraries, each devoted to a particular department of literature or science, and to which access is to be obtained on application to any of the gentlemen possessing the requisite power, whose names and address are always to be learned on the spot.

It is not necessary that I should make a reference to the fourteen miscellaneous libraries intended for public convenience. There is one of these libraries which not only rises in importance far above every other, but which contains fifty times the number of volumes contained in all the rest, put together. The library to which I allude is the *Bibliothéque du Roi*, or King's Library. The entrance to this library is from the Rue Richelieu. A more convenient locality could not have been chosen,—the Rue Richelieu being in the very centre of Paris. Access is at all times to be obtained to the library, without the production of any order, or the necessity of going through any formality whatever.

The building is old and dingy in appearance. The outside has nothing pleasing or lively about it, and the inside is exceedingly heavy. The first large room which the visitor enters, is chiefly interesting for the number of ancient copies of the bible, and other valuable works of by-gone ages, which it contains. I was particularly struck with the elegance of the printing in one Latin bible, published in 1540,—more than three hundred years ago. The room is very long, though I cannot say what is its exact length. Its breadth is about thirty feet, and its height about twenty-five. The floor creaks so much beneath the visitor's feet, that he almost feels at times afraid it may give way beneath him. Like all the floors in Paris, it is polished with a certain composition, which renders it so slippery, that a person is obliged to pass along it as he would over a sheet of ice. The dusty aspect of the books in this part of the building, affords conclusive proof that they are seldom used. They are, I ought to mention, not only

old, but chiefly learned works, which only profound scholars are likely to inquire for. Not the least interesting object in this room, is a copy of the Revelation of St. John, which belonged to Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Order of Jesuits. None of the rooms have the fine, airy, spacious, and lofty appearance of the rooms in our British Museum. The reading-room is about as long as the reading-room in the British Museum; but it is not half the width. It is a long narrow room, and partakes of the general dulness of the building. To those who, like myself, have spent much of their time in the reading-room of the British Museum, it must be exceedingly uncomfortable. There is only one table in the room, which extends pretty nearly from end to end. Hence all the readers are ranged into two rows. To the English eye, there is something strange in this; but to those Frenchmen who have never seen the public libraries, in other lands, where there are twenty

or thirty tables, there will not seem to be anything odd in it.

With regard to the mode of management, I think that the book department of the British Museum is much better conducted than the King's Library, in Paris. In the latter library there is no catalogue for the use of the reader. The consequence often is, great delay in procuring the book he wants to consult. If it be one which is seldom inquired for, he may think himself fortunate if he gets it in an hour or two. Instances are not unfrequent in which a literary man loses the better part of a day in waiting for a particular work. The number of persons constantly employed in searching for and bringing books to literary men, is eighteen or twenty ; and hard, and dusty, and disagreeable work they have of it.

The average attendance in the reading-room of the King's Library, is, as nearly as I could judge by the eye, much about the same as

in the reading-room of the British Museum. On the day I visited the *Bibliothéque du Roi*, the attendance might have been from 200 to 250,—which I was given to understand was about the average attendance. The visitors are very properly excluded from this room. By this means the readers are not exposed to those interruptions from talking, and walking about, which they would otherwise be.

In Paris, the reader or student is not allowed, as with us, to have as many books beside him as he pleases. The number he is permitted to have, varies from three to five, according to the value and nature of the works.

In one of the rooms containing the books, there is a door leading into another room, which is so ingeniously made, that, until it is opened, you have no idea there is a door in the place at all. It is so formed as to seem a continuance of the shelves laden with books. The Earl of Wicklow has, I am told, a door on a similar plan in his library. On the part at which it

opens there is a fixture imitation of a goodly octavo, so excellent as to be mistaken for an actual volume. On the back there are seen, in gilt letters, the words "Locke on the Understanding,"—meaning that there is a lock in that particular place, which, if the visitor has only the requisite "understanding" to turn, it will enable him to open the door, and pass into an adjoining room. The visitor, however, has rarely, if ever, the requisite "understanding" to comprehend the meaning of the words.

There is one respect in which I think the great Parisian Public Library has, in point of management, an advantage over us. I refer to the circumstance of there being a separate room for those who are copying engravings or paintings. Literature and the fine arts are thus kept distinct from each other; and those who are employed in studying the latter, find they can do so with much more comfort in a small room by themselves, than if they were, as in the British Museum, obliged to sit with the

literary men; for they are constantly moving about, and consequently causing more or less noise,—which all know to be unfavourable to the cultivation of the higher branches of the fine arts.

Not only the King's Library, but most of the public libraries are daily open to students from nine till three, throughout the year, except during the period which intervenes between the first of September and the fifteenth of October. As every body is supposed to go out of Paris in September, the gentlemen who have the management of the principal public libraries, assume that authors and literary amateurs will constitute no exception to the rest of the community. Besides, it is necessary that the servants of the establishment should have their holiday as well as other people. The only thing complained of by the literary men of Paris is, that the holiday is too long,—being six weeks and a half. The reading room of the British Museum is never shut for a third part of that time. To visitors, the King's Library is open on Tuesdays and Fridays.

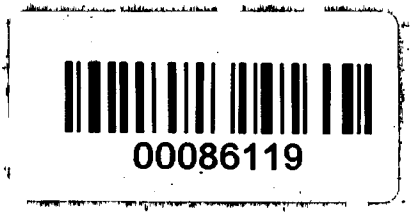
The number of books which the King's Library contains is variously given. I have seen it stated as low as 700,000 and as high as 1,200,000. It, undoubtedly, contains a greater number of works than any other library in the world, but the latter number must be an exaggeration. And yet it is right I should state that one of the individuals holding a situation in it, assured me it was not. I am aware that the practice with the French, is to count every pamphlet, however small—even though not containing a dozen pages—as a book; while in the British Museum, it is customary to bind up ten or twelve pamphlets in one volume, and then only consider the latter a book. But even conceding to the French their own notions of what constitutes a book, I will not and cannot believe, that there is the extraordinary number of 1,200,000 in the place. The space occupied by the books in the British Museum is more than twice as great, and yet it is not pretended by the librarians of that establishment, that the

entire collection exceeds 300,000 volumes. I am aware that French works are much less bulky than English books, but making every allowance for this, I feel assured that the number of books, even including pamphlets under the designation, is not very much above, if so high as 800,000. The number of manuscript works is about 75,000.

The King's Library is particularly rich in the fine arts. I was amazed as I passed through the apartments devoted to the fine arts, both at the number of volumes, and the quality of the engravings. In this respect it is decidedly superior to the British Museum. And the superiority is to be accounted for on this very intelligible ground,—that the French are incomparably superior to us in all that appertains to the fine arts. The number of engravings exceeds 1,500,000. Of maps and plans there are about 300,000. I may mention, as a proof of the prevalence of a taste for the fine arts in France, that from forty to fifty persons

were engaged in copying engravings the day I visited the Library. In the reading room of the British Museum I have seldom seen more than six or seven individuals so employed.

END OF VOL. I.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